Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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Israel

The Tzomet party is quitting the coalition in protest following the Likud Central Committee's defeat of a resolution endorsing the direct election of the prime minister, Jerusalem radio reported. A PRC vice foreign minister arrived and conferred with Shamir and Levi, Tel Aviv radio reported. Work on the Arrow antiballistic missile is to be suspended soon pending a management "shake-up," HA'ARETZ disclosed. Arrow project sources denied that a top executive's resignation was caused by U.S. "pressure," the newspaper continued.

Libya

An attempted coup led by an officer and a civilian was foiled 30 November, according to the London paper AL-HAYAH, which cited "reliable Arab sources;" the paper earlier reported that al-Qadhdhafi fears a coup by pro-Sudan officers.

Saudi Arabia

King Fahd received Syrian Staff Major Basil al-Asad, Damascus radio reported.

Syria

SANA reported on a press conference held by a Damascus-based Iraqi opposition leader who presented a plan to topple Saddam Husayn.

Iraq

Saddam spoke about the economic blockade, INA reported. The defense minister wrote about democracy and Army affairs, in the Defense Ministry newspaper AL-QADISIYAH. The former defense minister was reportedly barred from entering all state offices, the clandestine Voice of the Iraqi people radio reported. An opposition group gave Saddam two months to step down, in a statement "issued in Baghdad," Radio Monte Carlo reported.

Iran

The Iraqi charge d'affaires was summoned to hear a protest on a "terrorist attack" in Baghdad against two Iranian diplomats, IRNA reported. Intelligence and Security Ministry officials prevented nine Majles deputies from meeting with Hoseyn 'Ali Montazeri, the clandestine Flag of Freedom radio affirmed.

Gulf Cooperation Council

The Kuwait amir addressed the GCC summit's opening session, in remarks broadcast by a London international Arabic television station.

Palestinian Affairs

Fatah has decided to end its military structure in Lebanon, according to the London paper AL-HAYAH, which quoted "informed Palestinian sources."

Afghanistan

A joint Afghan-Russian statement at the end of the Russian vice president's visit was reported by Kabul radio.

South Asian Regional Affairs

Regional media reported speeches and contacts held by leaders attending the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation summit in Colombo.

Inter-Arab Affairs

GCC Summit Continues Proceedings

Kuwaiti Amir Speaks

NC2312190591 London MBC Television in Arabic 1708 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Speech by Kuwaiti Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah at the opening session of the Gulf Cooperation Council, GCC, summit conference from the Bayan Palace in Kuwait—live]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Praise be to God, lord of the universe. God's prayers and peace be upon our prophet Muhammad, the last of the prophets.

Brothers, God's peace and blessings be upon you. This is a notable day in Kuwait's history, in which happiness, pride, and hope have been achieved. On its territory and among its people, distinguished leaders and honorable brothers have met, brought together by sincere brotherhood and honest endeavor for the good of their peoples and nation.

Kuwait today welcomes the GCC leaders under an extended canopy of old and modern ties, old and renewed relationships, rooted in the past and extended by the present to the future in anticipation of more fruitful results. Today liberated Kuwait is embracing revered brothers who have swallowed with it the bitterness of the ordeal and endured a great deal for its sake until the affliction ended and victory was achieved. Kuwait's happiness at the victory is equal to its sense of thankfulness to God first and then you, brothers, and to your noble peoples. Kuwait will keep this in its heart and will bequeath it to future generations. It will, in fact, be kept by history as a glowing mark of honorable relations among peoples when truth and conscience are tested. History will record for the GCC peoples that their slogans were principles and their sayings have turned into facts.

Even if the generations of our nation have been bewildered by many slogans and sayings because of the different positions and contradictory actions of some, the positions adopted by the Gulf states during the Kuwaiti ordeal have restored much of the confidence to our generations that the brotherhood among our peoples is a tangible and proven reality.

Needless to say, brothers, the objective of the Iraqi aggression was not only Kuwait, but included all GCC states. The emergence of this fact increases our awareness and determination to proceed forward in strengthening the ties of cohesion among our states. This means that the aspiration for a cooperative and secure life to all our peoples must be based on our unity, and that our present and future plans stem from this concept.

I do not have the slightest doubt that you all agree with me that we are dealing with a completely new situation, which resulted from the aggression which had a direct effect on our Gulf people, who were in the middle of the events. These peoples now look forward to seeing something new that will give them hope in the present and confidence in the future. I am overwhelmed by a deep feeling that each Gulf people looks forward to seeing our Gulf unity manifested in practical formulas and realistic procedures that could be felt by the public.

This means that we all have to engage in a serious and in-depth search for a new concept of cooperation among our peoples, a lively, vast, and all-inclusive concept bursting with activity that could encompass all our potential and, at the same time, achieve our people's aspirations; this is a cooperation that could involve the material and spiritual, man and the environment, a cooperation that starts with man for the welfare of man. We in the Gulf possess all the qualifications and elements for such cooperation, and before that, we have our people's will and aspirations.

O brothers: The convening of this summit at this time on Kuwaiti soil following its liberation reveals several signs of unity among our countries and peoples, the firm bonds linking them to their Arab origins and their Islamic affiliation, and their renewable relations with friendly countries worldwide. The accelerating changes and the interlaced relations in the world around us compel us to face up to them and take appropriate steps to deal with them, keeping in mind that all our steps are compatible with our firm principles bestowed upon us by our glorious religion and Arab history.

Concerted efforts must be made to resolve the Palestinian question, especially the issue of holy Jerusalem, in a way that guarantees the rights of the Palestinian people and the hopes of the Muslims. The issue of fraternal Lebanon should be resolved as well so it can retrieve its inalienable right to territorial unity through the implementation of Security Council resolutions, which is the way peace can spread throughout the region.

O brothers: Our meeting is an expression of the will of our peoples and a practical formulation of the firm bonds among them. The subjects and results of this meeting are born by and for these peoples. They are the hopes that their hearts look forward to, the aspirations that their souls long for, and the needs that fill their minds. They could be summarized in closer ties, deeper and clearer links, and a free and dignified life based on justice, aspirations and results which seek prosperity and which are governed by confidence in a secure future for generations not threatened by fear, terror, or suspicion. We will do what we can to realize these hopes, aspirations, and needs, and our steps will follow faith and science with confidence in our peoples' capabilities and potential. The approach to any endeavor is what God Almighty has taught us in the Koran: Thee do we worship and thine aid we seek. [Koranic verse]

Brothers, what you agreed upon at our last meeting in fraternal Qatar has been realized. You announced then that your next meeting would be in Kuwait. Permit me, bothers, to say a true word for history's sake. Our meeting today in Kuwait and on the specified date has materialized first, thanks to God, and then, thanks to my brother King Fahd, his crown prince, his brothers, and his fraternal people for the principled stand they took, the great sacrifices they shouldered, and the dangerous situation to which they exposed their country and people.

Brothers, Kuwait will always be your second homeland. Welcome to its soil and welcome into the hearts of its people. As I said at the beginning of my speech, this is a notable day in Kuwait's history in which happiness, pride, and hope have been achieved—happiness in your presence, pride in you and in your fraternal peoples, and hope that you will have a nice stay, that the aspirations of your peoples will be realized through you, and that God will guide and support us. I hope that you will continue your energetic efforts for the return of our prisoners and hostages so that our happiness will become complete.

Our Lord, we put our trust and fate in your hands. Our Lord, grant us mercy and guide our path. God's peace and blessings be upon you. [applause]

First Closed Session Concludes

LD2312205291 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 2007 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Excerpt] Kuwait, 23 Dec (KUNA)—GCC member states leaders tonight ended their closed-door talks following the opening session chaired by Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah, his excellency the amir of Kuwait, as head of of the 12th session.

Conference sources told KUNA tonight that during their first working session the six GCC member states leaders heard a statement by 'Abdallah Bisharah, secretary general of the Council, dealing with the march of the Council since the 11th session held in Doha last December. These sources said the GCC foreign ministers will hold a meeting tomorrow morning before their leaders' second working session. The sources said that during their meeting, the foreign ministers will review the final formula of the topics on their agenda in preparation for submitting them to the leaders.

The agenda includes the setting up of a unified Gulf army, and the adopting of a draft agreement on a $10 billion program of support for development efforts in some Arab states, and other issues. [passage omitted]

Foreign Ministers Meet, Discuss Agenda

NC2412111191 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1000 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] The GCC Ministerial Council, which comprises the foreign ministers of the GCC member states, held a meeting this morning under the chairmanship of Shaykh Salim al-Sabah, deputy prime minister and foreign minister. [words indistinct] issues on the agenda of the GCC's 12th summit, including political, economic, security, and media issues. The foreign ministers also discussed the draft resolutions and recommendations that will be issued by the summit to present to GCC leaders.

Session Resumes, Bisharah Comments

NC2412112291 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1000 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Excerpts] Their majesties and highnesses, leaders of the countries of the GCC, are resuming their 12th summit to discuss the issues on the agenda.

GCC leaders started the meetings of the 12th summit last night. His highness the amir opened the session with a speech. [passage omitted]

GCC Secretary General 'Abdallah Ya'qub Bisharah described the meeting the six GCC leaders held last night after the opening session as very positive and marked by a spirit of understanding and optimism. He said in a statement to journalists yesterday that the characteristics of the conference have started emerging, especially in light of the contacts the GCC leaders have held.

He pointed out that during the opening session, a report was presented on the activities of the GCC in security, social, political, defense, youth, and legal affairs since the Doha summit.

Group Makes 17 Jan Day of Solidarity With Iraq

JN2312121491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0750 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Dec (INA)—Sa'd Qasim Hammudi, Arab Popular Conference [APO] secretary general, has said that 17 January will be an Arab and international day of solidarity with Iraq in line with the resolutions of the third Baghdad conference for the Arab popular forces.

In an interview in AL-JUMHURIYAH today, the conference secretary general said that the general secretariat is preparing a detailed program as a reminder of the evil crimes committed by the 30-state alliance against Iraq. Iraqi, Arab, and international parties will implement this program.

He added that Baghdad will witness Arab solidarity in the presence of members of the APO general secretariat from several Arab countries in addition to holding similar celebrations in every Arab country in which popular parties and unions, professional associations, and political figures, which condemn the aggression and support Iraq in its defiance of the unjust siege imposed against the people of Iraq, will participate.

Palestinian Affairs

Fatah Said To End Military Presence in Lebanon

PM2312123191 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 20 Dec 91 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "Fatah Ends Organized Military Presence in Lebanon"]

[Excerpts] Tunis, AL-HAYAH— Informed Palestinian sources in Tunis told AL-HAYAH yesterday that the Fatah movement has finally decided to dismantle its military formation in Lebanon which in the past was structured as a complete military pyramid comprising brigades and battalions.

Israeli military sources recently said that, in his capacity as commander in chief of the Palestinian armed forces, Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat had begun dismantling Fatah's military force in Lebanon. [passage omitted]

The [Palestinian] sources said that Fatah has abandoned its organized military presence in the camps and that local militias consisting of elements from the local population, not foreign elements, will defend the camps against any threat. The decision to dismantle the regular military force meant sending away the officers who had gone there from abroad to places where there are Palestinian camps—such as Libya, Yemen, Algeria, and Sudan. A few officers have returned to Tunisia. The departure of the others is proceeding quietly.

Fatah had in the past sought to strengthen its military presence in Lebanon to defend the camps. [passage omitted]

Delegates Criticize U.S. Position on Talks

'Ashrawi, al-Husayni

JN2312195091 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] Palestinian delegates to the Washington bilateral talks have said that the United States served Israel's interests when it refused to intervene in the peace talks.

In a press conference today at the al-Hakawati Theater in Arab Jerusalem, Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the delegation, said: The United States should have intervened in the discussions. By not doing so, the United States has violated the spirit of the letter of assurances it gave to us.

Faysal al-Husayni also criticized the United States because it did not attempt to influence the discussions during the bilateral talks in Washington, and said that this has served Israel. He added that this, however, should not lead to the conclusion that the Americans' credibility is fully in doubt.

Al-Husayni added that it is still too early to talk about the success or failure of the peace talks. He said: The matter concerns a confrontation between Israel and the Palestinians, the outcome of which cannot be determined by a round or two of talks.

'Abd-al-Shafi on Talks, Federal Model

NC2212081591 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0545 GMT 22 Dec 91

[Michel al-Haj report from Washington]

[Text] Radio Free Lebanon has interviewed Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al- Shafi, head of the Palestinian delegation to the Middle East peace talks, who is spending the holidays in the United States until bilateral talks resume on 7 January.

In his usual calm manner, Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi voiced disappointment over the time that was wasted over the past two weeks during the negotiations in U.S. State Department corridors. The Palestinian delegation believes that the United States did not exert the pressure on Israel it should have in its capacity as a cosponsor of the talks and the only country able to compel Israel to abide by the agreements reached in Madrid and at earlier meetings between U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and the Palestinians in Jerusalem. During those meeting, the principle of two-track talks, one Palestinian and one Jordanian, was established. The Palestinian delegation believes the current atmosphere does not suggest that an agreement will be reached with Israel in the near future even when negotiations are resumed next month because the positions of the parties were not flexible enough at previous meetings. Hence, the Palestinians do not expect a very optimistic climate at future meetings.

The Palestinian delegation sees the difference over procedures, particularly the concept of two-track talks and having equal numbers of Jordanian, Palestinian, and Israeli representatives at any joint meeting of the three delegations, as a basic issue. The Israelis believe such an arrangement splits the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. Therefore, over the holidays the Palestinian delegation must consider submitting this dispute to the cosponsors of the talks, especially the United States.

The Palestinians also said they do not wish to do anything to threaten the peace process.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said there was closer rapprochement at the last meeting of the Israeli, Jordanian, and Palestinian chief delegates than before.

On his views on how to resolve the core dispute with Israel, 'Abd-al-Shafi said he welcomes establishing a federal system comprising the occupied territories and Jordan. In this connection, he noted the intimate, diverse, and intermingled ties between the Jordanian and Palestinian peoples.

The Palestinian delegation members believe that if an agreement is reached over such a federal system, the majority of Palestinian refugees in Arab countries will return to their country because there is room for investment there.

Nusaybah Urges U.S. Intervention

TA2012142091 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in Arabic 19 Dec 91 p 1

[Report by Khalid Abu-'Akir]

[Text] Jerusalem, Washington—Dr. Sari Nusaybah, member of the steering committee for the Palestinian negotiating delegation, stressed that talks with Israel will not begin unless it recognizes the independent Palestinian-Israeli negotiations track.

In a telephone interview with AL-FAJR from Washington, Nusaybah accused Israel of escalating its practices in the occupied territories "in a bid to pressure the Palestinian delegation and force it to begin talks according to Israeli precepts."

Nusaybah called on the United States to intervene to resolve the Palestinian-Israeli disagreement, which stems from a difference of opinion over the interpretation of the letter of invitation to the two sides. He noted that the current U.S. vacillation gives the impression that the Israeli interpretation is the correct one.

Nusaybah said the present deadlock in the negotiations "will increase the pressure and insistence that the United States intervene and break the deadlock." He pointed out that this sort of deadlock will provide opportunities for future diplomatic moves "that will benefit us more than Israel."

Nusaybah noted that the Israeli delegation at the Washington talks did not have the authority and freedom to negotiate with the Palestinians, unlike the Palestinian delegation, which was authorized by its leadership to hold direct, bilateral negotiations with the Israelis.

Delegates on 'Difficult Battle' in Washington

LD2312222391 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Station commentary]

[Text] Brothers: The members of the Palestinian delegation who returned from Washington expressed their conviction that the United States has surrendered to the Israeli demand of nonintervention in the bilateral negotiations. Dr. Ghassan al-Khatib, Dr. Sami al- Kilani, Mr. Samih Kan'an, and Miss Zahirah Kamal, in separate talks they have held, were unanimous that the peace march is not governed by the will of a U.S. President, but by a U.S. policy that insists on solving the Palestinian issue despite the internal circumstances it is witnessing, in addition to its preoccupation with events in the Soviet Union. They said that the firmness of the Jordanian position in supporting the Palestinian position had enabled the Arab delegation to abort the Israeli scheme which aimed to blow up the peace process.

The delegation members made it clear in their responses to the questions posed by the press that the Palestinian delegation strongly rejects the integration of the two Palestinian and Jordanian delegations at the bilateral talks so as to foil Israel's attempt to draw the Palestinian delegation into conducting negotiations under occupation. They said that the Israeli delegation has proved through the corridor talks that it is not serious about the peace march, as it claimed that it was not authorized to discuss basic issues. They stressed that the Arab delegations have proved to international society and public opinion that they wanted peace, while the Israeli side appeared as the party which wanted to blow up the negotiations.

They also demanded from the United States—being a sponsor of the peace conference and the one which issued the invitations—to identify the features of the forthcoming round, as so far no agreement has yet been reached on how this phase will be conducted. The members of the Palestinian delegation made it clear that the Washington round is a difficult battle, and is entirely different from the Madrid round which was merely a conclusion [as heard] ceremony, pointing out that we have now entered the core of the negotiating process.

They also said that the United States was not flexible in dealing with the Palestinian delegation , because it refused to grant entry visas to some members of the consultative delegation, which gave Israel the opportunity to do as it wished. They added that the Israeli community in Washington exerted great influence on the conduct of the negotiations through its control of the various mass media. This has served the Israeli side and made Washington a convenient place for the Israelis. They pointed out that repealing the resolution which equates Zionism with racism came at a time when Israel escalated its wild campaign against the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories, making it clear that repealing this resolution was a gain for the Israeli delegation.

The members of the Palestinian delegation stressed that the delegation will adhere to the basic constants which were defined by the political leadership, epitomized in the PLO leadership, the legitimate and sole representative of the Palestinian people. The members of the delegation made it clear that the cornerstone of the third round of negotiations is the independence of the Palestinian delegation—which will materialize despite rejection from the Israeli side. They said that the positive or negative results of the negotiations depend on the Arab position and the extent of its solidarity, and we hope that the chapter of the Gulf war will be a phase of past Arab history, in order to reach a situation that enables the Arab delegations to reach a just and comprehensive settlement in the Middle East. The members of the Palestinian delegation believe that the Soviet Union played only a marginal role. But the Palestinian delegation is betting on the determination of the Palestinian people to continue its struggle to achieve its objectives, in addition to the unity of this people and its cohesiveness.

'Arafat Message on UN Resolution Repeal

JN2212183291 Sanaa Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1600 GMT 22 Dec 91

[Text] Brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine and chairman of the PLO Executive

Committee, addressed a message of thanks and appreciation yesterday to the leaders of the friendly and fraternal countries that voted against the resolution repealing Resolution 3379 of 1975, which equated Zionism with racism. In his message, brother president Abu-'Ammar expressed his high appreciation for the stands adopted by these countries, which he described as principled and courageous, despite the pressure exerted by the U.S. Administration.

Brother president Abu-'Ammar considered the stands of these countries, manifested in voting against the repeal resolution, as a continuation of the support for the just struggle of the Palestinian people.

He also explained the objectives the United States is seeking to achieve behind the repeal resolution. He said: This resolution has been revoked as a result of the force of pressure and the practices of the U.S. Administration, given that it is the sole superpower, in order to consolidate the U.S. policy of the arrogance of power and to support the occupation and aggression of the Israeli Government and its continued crimes against our people, children, women, and holy places. It is also meant to support suppressive, racist, and iron-fist policies; the seizure of Palestinian territories; the building of Israeli settlements on our occupied Palestinian territory; the settling of immigrant Soviet Jews and others after expelling our people from there; and the continuation of inhuman, racist practices against our masses. These practices include mass detention camps for our cadres, even our children; the use of violent methods and internationally banned gases, causing miscarriages; demolishing houses, and spoiling crops. These crimes have even been recognized by the Israeli human rights group, Betzelem, given that the resolution equating Zionism with racism was originally issued in 1975 because of these crimes. These crimes have not changed; in fact, they have escalated and worsened. Changing this resolution, therefore, should be linked to changing Zionist thought, ending Israeli suppressive crimes and practices against our Palestinian people both inside and outside our occupied territory, and recognizing the inalienable national rights of our Palestinian people, rights which have been endorsed by the United Nations. The importance of this is seen in the light of the annual and continuous UN condemnation of these Israeli practices through numerous resolutions, given that these practices constitute a flagrant violation of the UN Charter, international law, and the Fourth Geneva Convention.

In his message, brother president Abu-'Ammar also pointed to the perilous dimensions that will result from this dangerous conformity in international relations. He said: The pressure exerted by the United States and the Zionist movement to peddle this recent resolution during the convening of the peace talks in Washington—which the Israeli Government tried to obstruct and blow up—does not serve the peace process in any way, nor does it bolster the UN role in it. This pressure is a reward to Israel and its continued occupation of Palestinian and Arab territory and the escalation of its racist policies.

Concluding his message, brother president Abu-'Ammar said: While pursuing their just struggle and looking forward to achieving a just peace, the Palestinian people highly appreciate your constant support for their just cause. They are looking forward to your support for their pressing demand to ensure international protection for our masses and holy places in the occupied Palestinian territories in accordance with international resolutions.

S. Asian Regional Affairs

South Asian Cooperation Association Meets

SAARC Council of Ministers Session

BK2012153691 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 1420 GMT 20 Dec 91

["OANA/pool item"]

[Text] Colombo, 20 Dec (LANKAPUVATH)—The SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] Council of Ministers comprising the foreign ministers of the member countries under the chairmanship of Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Harold Herat today resumed their session which was earlier adjourned sine die on 5 November 1991. Prior to their formal meeting at 1030 hours (local time) today at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall (BMICH) they held a round of informal consultations at the same venue to discuss matters relating to the draft declaration of the Colombo summit, states a press release issued by the Foreign Ministry in Colombo this evening.

Last night, the chairman of the SAARC standing committee, Sri Lanka's foreign secretary, Bernard Tilakaratne, also had informal consultations with the visiting foreign secretaries to discuss some of the important issues of the agenda.

The Foreign Ministry said that at today's formal session, the ministers continued their discussion of the agenda items including recommendations on the subject of regionalizing SAARC

They also directed the working group comprising senior officials to finalize the report of the Council of Ministers meeting and present it for adoption when the Council of Ministers hold their closing session at the Hotel Taj Samudra later this evening.

The senior officials will also finalize the draft declaration of the sixth meeting of the SAARC heads of state and governments, for recommendation by the Council of Ministers to the summit, which convenes tomorrow.

Speaking to reporters after this morning's session of the Council of Ministers meeting, Foreign Secretary Bernard Tilakaratne highlighted "the intensive effort that had been made at the official level within the very limited time available to enable agreement to be reached on

almost 90 per cent of the work connected with the draft declaration and the report of the meeting of the Council of Ministers".

Mr. Tilakaratne said "the atmosphere of understanding and cooperation that had prevailed throughout the discussions, augured well for the future of the SAARC".

Sri Lankan President Speaks

BK2112140591 Colombo Television Feed in English 0420 GMT 21 Dec 91

[Address by Sri Lankan President Premadasa to the inaugural session of the sixth SAARC summit in Colombo on 21 December—live]

[Text] Venerable sirs, distinguished guests, Your Majesty, Your Excellencies, on behalf of the people and on behalf of the Government of Sri Lanka I warmly welcome Your Majesty, Your Excellencies, and your delegations. We look forward to growing from good neighbors to good friends. As you know, a few weeks ago some of us were able to engage in conducting bilateral exchanges. I am confident that all of us will now benefit from this opportunity to broaden our discussion. We will be doing so within the context of SAARC—the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. It is my pleasant duty to extend a special welcome to Her Excellency Begum Khaleda Zia, the prime minister of Bangladesh; to His Excellency Sri Narasimha Rao, the prime minister of India; and to His Excellency the Right Honorable Girija Prasad Koirala, prime minister of Nepal, who are participating for the first time as heads of government at the SAARC summit.

I am happy to have with us in Colombo our colleagues His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, king of Bhutan; His Excellency Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, president of Maldives; and His Excellency Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, prime minister of Pakistan. I also welcome our Secretary General Mr. K.K. Bhargava. His Excellency Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, who functioned as the chairman of the sixth SAARC, has guided our association this past year with wisdom, with dedication, and with efficiency. We are grateful to him.

Ladies and gentlemen, the sixth SAARC summit assembles at a rare moment in human destiny. Around our planet, the tides of freedom flow with historic momentum. Liberating passions transform the political, economic, and cultural worlds in which we live. Repressive doctrines and alien ideologies are on the retreat. All of us who praise freedom of the human spirit should applaud these historic advances. Yet, ladies and gentlemen, our enthusiasm must be tempered with realism. As we all know, freedom and liberty are not gifts. They are purchased through sacrifice. They are maintained through constant labor. They require eternal vigilance against internal and external subversion. Now, these are the dues of liberty. They have to be paid with responsibility. They have to be paid with commitment. If not, we risk a fearsome halt in all the advances of recent years.

You will agree with me, distinguished guests, when I say that the ways of the world reflect in our region. All the member states of SAARC are moving to .. common realism, to a common realization. Political and economic liberties are growing. You see cultural isolation is eroding. Then technology brings both bounty and also burden to us. Our environment needs nurturing. We see these developments in different ways, we see these developments from different perspectives. Yet it was with good reason that the ancient sages of Vedic days said that truth is one although it is called by many names.

This brightening landscape has some dark corners. Only by cooperating more effectively can we banish these threats and these concerns. After all, regional cooperation means sharing and caring for each other. Its central motive must be one for all, all for one. Then only we can confront the dangers and the threats with confidence. Then only we can enhance our potential and reduce our concerns. The sixth SAARC summit should address these issues.

We are deeply indebted to his excellency President Gayoom of Maldives for visiting each of our capitals. He has done so for consultation and the adoption of a more businesslike and functional approach to the conduct of SAARC meeting. The report of his excellency Gayoom is before us for consideration. It will stimulate positive thinking. It must lead to considered decisions. I need not overemphasize the fact that these proposals have to be considered with the careful attention they deserve. Distinguished guests, my government would therefore be happy to offer Colombo as the venue for a special meeting of our foreign secretaries. They could meet early next year to devote their time exclusively to this question. They could report to us at the next summit through the Council of Ministers.

In dealing with this twin evils of terrorism and drugs, I must say that our collective efforts are gradually bearing fruit. As we all know, terrorism has extended an insidious network of death and destruction across our borders. It has extracted a terrible toll in our region. The SAARC regional convention on the suppression of terrorism provides us with a sound basis for action. Therefore, pending the enactment of enabling legislation by all member states under the convention, practical measures of cooperation must continue to be vigorously pursued. In other areas, SAARC needs now to move from principle to practice. We must now move to the peripheral to the central development issues. We must give priority to issues that actually affect the lives of our people in all our countries. Then only SAARC will be of relevance to our people. It will be relevant to our people only to the extent that we succeed in resolving such issues.

Among the central common questions which afflict our region is poverty. Deprivation anywhere in South Asia means, ladies and gentlemen, insecurity everywhere in South Asia. I must say that for our part, we will be glad to share our experience with Janasaviya—Sri Lanka's

poverty alleviation program. We are prepared to share that experience with everyone in our region. I recommend therefore for the consideration of your majesty and your excellencies the appointment of an independent South Asian commission on poverty alleviation. It should consist of eminent persons from each member state. This commission could study the question in all aspects and report to us.

Sri Lanka welcomes the growing bilateral relations that are developing among South Asian countries. Sri Lanka, for example, has formal institutional arrangements for the promotion of bilateral trade and other economic relations with Bangladesh, with India, with Maldives, and with Pakistan. In each of our countries, radical decision to transform our economies have been recently taken. We have removed the controls which had constricted economic activity. We have given fresh impetus to private initiative. We have encouraged people's participation in the economic development process. In Sri Lanka at this moment we are implementing a very popular peopliization program.

Democratization is a political as well as an economic process. We must give our people not only democratic freedom but also economic liberty. We have sought to attract foreign investment, technology inflows, and also joint ventures. Now in this context, the detailed study undertaken by the SAARC on trade, on manufactures, and on services acquires a special and timely relevance. The study has indicated that only 2.8 percent of the trade of SAARC countries is intraregional. Very revealing study. The study has shown also that considerable prospects exist to increase this volume. Sri Lanka has no illusions that developing this potential is simple. We are certain that tangible economic cooperation of benefit to our people can be promoted through an increase in trade within our region. Such cooperation will also have a positive effect on our relations in other areas.

On earlier occasions, you will remember, I have proposed a regional trade agreement. We can move toward this goal through series of incremental steps. We can construct categories of economic specialization for each of our countries. We can work toward creating a South Asian Preferential Trade Area—SAPTA. Then only can we envisage the eventual establishment of a South Asian Economic Community—SAEC. There is a larger significance to economic cooperation. It opens a pathway to the habits of regional cooperation.

In the SAARC region, political cooperation is a vital necessity. How else can we protect ourselves from the menace of cross-border terrorism and drug trafficking? How else can we peacefully resolve the disputes that inevitably arise between equal and sovereign states in close proximity? They occur frequently. But we have to resolve through a political brotherhood. How well can we build the confidence which leads to regional fraternity? All our governments look to our people for support and legitimacy. We derive our mandate through the democratic political process. They are our masters; we are their servants. We derive our legitimacy, a mandate, from our people. We must not remain inert when legitimate governments in our region are attacked by conspiracy, attacked by treachery, or by paid hirelings of outside forces. We can't just watch and (?wait). Can all of us remain silent when sinister criminals and frustrated elements plot to subvert the will of the people in any one of our countries? Do we not have a collective moral duty that transcends the technicalities of our charter?

When antidemocratic criminals plot to destroy the foundation of liberty, can we remain silent? Distinguished guests, these are important questions with relevance. I must say that they are questions we should not fear to discuss. These are questions to which we should find answers urgently.

Collaboration with candor best enables us to resist any unwelcome attempts to impose needless linkages on our relations with other regions of the world. We appreciate assistance from anywhere. But, how can legitimate governments deriving their sovereignty, deriving their mandate from their people accept fetters on their freedom from outside? And I must say that we must be alert to the danger, may I say, of a new colonialism wrapped in spurious moral considerations emanating from alien cultures. That is why we should appreciate, we should encourage frank exchanges.

We all know that our region is home to the oldest and most treasured cultures of the world. History tells us that in so many ways we are culturally indivisible. Yet we have not achieved the full cultural understanding which breaks barriers between neighbors. And let us endeavor to promote more cultural interaction which will touch the hearts of our peoples. Our people, in all, will appreciate such (?attempt). We will then prove that culture has no national boundaries, that culture will make us closer friends. It makes friends out of strangers, I must say: the cultural linkages, cultural affinity, the cultural brotherhood.

The insights of the Dhammapada [scriptures of Buddhism] take the insights of the Bhagavad Gita [Hindu religious scripture], the insights of the Holy Koran, the insights in the Biblical testament tell timeless truths. They tell us that we should have no hidden agenda and make no power plays. They tell us that we must learn from others and not seek to teach them lessons. We must always try to learn from others. We must never endeavor to teach lessons to others. We are bound to fail in such endeavors. These are the values that we have inherited. When we harken to these sentiments we need not fear the future. If we act in good faith, respect each other and acknowledge that we meet at SAARC as fully equal member states, our association will definitely prosper. Let us build our common house so that it accommodates everyone and excludes none. Then we will build with vision for lasting peace, for prosperity and progress in South Asia.

Our region accommodates, as we all know, one-fifth of the world's population. Now, ladies and gentlemen, this

is a vast reservoir of human talent, human wealth. Yet we have far less than one-fifth of the world's economic output. What a tragedy! We are among the most disadavantaged. Surely this must encourage us to work harder for all our people. All our efforts must benefit the weakest and the poorest in our countries and in our region. Then and only then we will fulfill the mandate by which we govern and through which we associate.

The territorial integrity of some SAARC states has been seriously threatened by the scourge of terrorism. Some of our countries in this region are being threatened. We have had to take extraordinary measures against terrorism because every state has the sacred duty to provide security to all law-abiding citizens. The state must provide opportunities to its citizens to fulfill their political, their economic, and their cultural aspirations free from the fear of terrorism. In this regard, the responsibility of the states must be seen in its full context. There is an unshirkable obligation to ensure law and order; to protect the human rights of all citizens; to pursue development in conditions of stability; to preserve from internal or external forces the democratic traditions and the processes cherished by the people to maintain the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the state. Now these efforts require, ladies and gentlemen, support and understanding. These efforts are retarded by terrorism. Therefore, cooperation among SAARC countries in combating terrorism is a regional imperative.

The very concept of the modern nation state is being challenged. Are we going to give in? The stale solution that is being offered to ethnic and other divisions is to dismember states. The alleged reports of human rights violations are also held out as reason to doubt the viability of nation states. Domestic solutions are not given a chance. Human rights are interpreted in narrow and exclusively political terms. This approach ignores, ladies and gentlemen, important economic and social rights afforded to individuals in many developing states. Now these are issues which we must consider. A collective approach will help all of us to assess these developments. It is in this spirit and informed by the ethics of values and ethics of regional cooperation that Sri Lanka will conduct its stewardship in the year ahead. So, let us move to the tasks we have to undertake. These are tasks of great magnitude. They are tasks which will test the limits of our vision, the limits of our creativity. Yet, I must say, that they are tasks well within the reach of our collective commitment. They are tasks which constantly remind us of the truth underlying SAARC. If we are not for each other, who will be for us?

Your Majesty, Your Excellencies, the year ahead is not another ordinary year for Sri Lanka. I must say that it is an extraordinary year. During this year Sri Lanka will exert all her might for the well-being of the people of the whole of South Asia. Your Majesty, Your Excellencies, on behalf of my country, my government, and my people let me pledge that we are prepared to make all the necessary sacrifices for the common good of all our people.

In conclusion, let me thank all of you for your presence here. Let me also reiterate Sri Lanka's warm welcome to you all. I wish you a pleasant and fruitful stay in Sri Lanka. May the rain fall in time, may the harvest be rich, may be world be prosperous, may the rulers be righteous. I thank you. [applause]

Sri Lankan Prime Minister

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[Text] The sixth summit of the South Asian leaders ended in Colombo today with a call for strengthening regional cooperation through bilateral contacts. Sri Lankan President Premadasa, who became the new SAARC chairman of the one-day summit, said the leaders should have more personal contacts to help resolve regional problems. He gave the call for strengthening SAARC in his closing statement. Under the organization's rotational system, Bangladesh will host the seventh summit next year in Dhaka where the first such meeting was held in 1985. The South Asian leaders adopted the Colombo declaration at the concluding session setting out SAARC resolution, aims, and achievement.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, who delivered the vote of thanks, urged the member states to step up efforts to strengthen regional cooperation. She said that Colombo summit has achieved important [word indistinct].

Earlier, addressing the summit, Begum Khaleda Zia called for making a solemn pledge to pursue with tenacity the problems of poverty and underdevelopment in the SAARC region. Begum Zia emphasized the need for the region's political and economic security rather than military security.

The summit was attended by heads of governments and states of Bangladesh, Bhutan, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, India, and host Sri Lanka.

The prime minister said four areas of social issues namely poverty alleviation, environment, women development and institutional adjustments in SAARC need to be given priority for effecting economic growth in the region. Begum Zia said the poor people of the region must be provided with dal-bhat [two square meals] and their basic needs of nutrition, clothing, shelter, health, family planning, and primary education satisfactorily. Referring to the success stories of poverty alleviation in other South Asian countries, Begum Khaleda Zia called for examining those experiences for their application in the SAARC countries.

Pakistani Prime Minister

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[Speech by Pakistani Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif to the SAARC summit in Colombo on 21 December—live]

[Text] Mr. Chairman, Your Majesty, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen. It is a great pleasure for me to be in Sri Lanka again. To the people of this enchanting land, I bring greetings and best wishes from the people of Pakistan. We are happy that the sixth SAARC summit is being held in such warm and pleasant surroundings. We wish the summit every success. On behalf of my delegation members, I would like to express my gratitude for the warm welcome accorded to us. The gracious hospitality and many courtesies being extended to us are overwhelming. The arrangements made for our stay as well as for the conference are impeccable.

Mr. Chairman, your lucid and thought-provoking inaugural address has set the tone for our deliberations. Your statement clearly demonstrates your government's commitment to SAARC and will continue to serve as a most useful guide for our discussions. I assure you of our full cooperation in achieving the objectives of the SAARC charter.

Mr. Chairman, it is with a sense of deep satisfaction and pleasure that I convey to you the warm felicitations of the government and the people of Pakistan as well as my own sincere congratulations on your assuming the chairmanship of the sixth meeting of the heads of state or government of the SAARC conference member states. We are confident that with your vast experience, wisdom, and sincerity of purpose, you would guide our deliberations most skillfully and bring them to a successful conclusion.

May I take this opportunity to pay a special tribute to our outgoing chairman, His Excellency Mr. Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, the president of the Republic of Maldives. He discharged his responsibilities with great wisdom, tact, and consummate skill that have earned for him our abiding admiration and gratitude. I am confident he shall continue to enrich our association with his vision and foresight.

I would like to specially welcome Her Excellency Begum Khaleda Zia, the prime minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. My country enjoys fraternal relations with Bangladesh and it is a source of great joy for us to see the Bangladesh delegation being headed by a popularly elected leader. At this juncture, I cannot help recording that the initial idea of institutionalized cooperation among the South Asian countries had been mooted by her illustrious husband, the late President Ziaur Rahman. It must be very satisfying for her to see that the sapling planted by her late husband has taken deep root and is growing steadily.

I would also like to warmly welcome His Excellency Mr. Narasimha Rao, who is joining our forum for the first time as prime minister of India. He is not, however, a newcomer to SAARC. Indeed, he has played a pioneering role in its establishment. We shall gain from his knowledge and experience.

I extend an equally warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Girija Prasad Koirala, the prime minister of Nepal, who heads the new democratic government of Nepal. I am confident that his (?skill) and sagacity would enrich our deliberations and contribute to the further strengthening of SAARC.

Mr. Chairman, our secretary general, His Excellency Mr. Kant Kishore Bhargava, will be completing his tenure by the end of the current year. Mr. Bhargava has served SAARC with distinction and dedication. During his tenure, the association has gained both in effectiveness and stature. We wish him long life, health, and every success in his future endeavors and hope that he will continue his association with SAARC. As we bid farewell to Mr. Bhargava, I would like to extend a specially warm welcome to the new secretary general, Mr. Ibrahim Hussain Zaki, whose skill and experience will be invaluable to our organization.

Mr. Chairman, the Council of Ministers deserves to be praised for the well-considered efforts of its ninth and 10th sessions. They provide a significant impetus toward achieving SAARC objectives. We fully endorse the recommendations contained in these reports.

Mr. Chairman, the momentous changes taking place across the globe have raised hopes for international peace and security. They have also generated concerns about the economic well-being of the developing countries. Ideological and political confrontations between the two traditional blocs on the world stage is disappearing. The movement for self-determination, freedom, democracy, and respect for human rights has spread across the globe and cannot be denied. Self-reliance, free enterprise, and market forces are increasingly recognized as essential for economic growth of developing countries. There has been a sea change in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Prospects of a just and durable settlement of the Palestinian problem appear to be improving. Racial discrimination and apartheid are in retreat. The problem of Afghanistan is nearer to a solution. The developing countries, especially those in South Asia, can benefit from the present global situation. We must realize that we need peace and stability for economic and social progress and that lasting peace can only be assured if we abide by the principles of the UN Charter, fulfill the commitments undertaken by us bilaterally and internationally, and settle our disputes peacefully on the basis of justice and fair play.

Mr. Chairman, we can close our eyes to the present trends only at the risk of denying our people the fruits of development. We can shut our eyes to the realities of today only at the risk of consigning our people to continued poverty, illiteracy, undernourishment, and tension. But, should that be the destiny of our people? Certainly not. My government has therefore set as its first priority the welfare of the people and the economic development of the country. We are determined to foster better understanding and cooperation with all countries, especially our neighbors. We wish to address all problems and disputes sincerely and seriously with the objective of seeking honorable solutions based on mutual accommodation. We look for a similar commitment and sincerity of purpose from others.

The emerging new world order can be an improvement over the previous one only if it is based on justice and equity and reflects the collective aspirations of mankind. Mr. Chairman, I wish to reaffirm with absolute clarity in this august forum that Pakistan supports the elimination of nuclear, and indeed, all other weapons of mass destruction from our region and from the world. We are willing to enter into any international, regional, or bilateral commitment in this regard provided it is equitable and does not discriminate against us. These are not empty words. We have proved our sincerity by making a number of nondiscriminatory and equitable proposals over more than 17 years. In June this year, I had proposed consultations among the United States, the Soviet Union, China, India, and Pakistan to discuss and resolve the issue of nuclear proliferation in South Asia. I had also proposed regime for ensuring that South Asia remained free of all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. The response so far is not disheartening. I am still hopeful that the leadership in South Asia will have the vision to banish forever the specter of nuclear weapons from this area.

Mr. Chairman, our resource constraints and underdevelopment pose major problems for our people. Unfortunately, the international economic environment, instead of being helpful in overcoming the problems, continues to add to our difficulties. The development efforts being undertaken in the developing countries cannot succeed if their access to developed markets is blocked. The colossal debt burden of the Third World and the net flow of resources from the poor countries to the rich nations are widening the gap between them. Added to this is the paucity of foreign investments. In order to be heard internationally, developing countries have to speak with one voice. It is here that SAARC can play a useful role. One way to do so would be for our delegations at international forums to articulate joint positions wherever possible. This would not only add weight to our individual positions but also enhance the international profile of our association.

Mr. Chairman, in today's world every project, undertaking, or activity has to pass the test of cost efficiency. This is even more important in the context of SAARC because of the limited resources available to us. The effort to make SAARC meetings more businesslike and functional is therefore most commendable. My government is grateful for the consultations undertaken by His Excellency Mr. Maumoon Abdul Gayoom toward this end. The attempt at rationalizing SAARC activities is equally praiseworthy. Pakistan's views on this important matter have already been made known. We would support the holding of a meeting to discuss and finalize recommendations on making SAARC meetings more businesslike and on rationalizing its activities.

Mr. Chairman, with every passing day environmental issues are gaining importance. There is serious concern that the mad rush for development and industrialization could make life on our planet difficult, if not dangerous, for future generations. In view of the lack of experience and resource constraints in the developing countries for combating environmental degradation, it is necessary to counter this escalating menace through mutual collaboration. We are happy that the SAARC regional study environment has been finalized. The recommendations made in the study merit our close attention with a view to translating them into action as soon as possible.

My government welcomes the decision taken by the Council of Ministers on launching of SAARC visa exemption scheme with effect from 1 March 1992. The launching of the scheme is a landmark in the achievements of SAARC and would provide judges of the supreme court and members of the national parliaments to travel freely within the SAARC countries. This interaction would help create greater awareness and better understanding among our policymakers of the different problems being faced by the people in South Asian region.

Mr. Chairman, allow me to express our deep regret that the Sixth SAARC Summit could not be held on schedule. We need to avoid such disruptive postponement in future, which can prove detrimental to the effectiveness of the organization. I would like to propose that a special session of the standing committee scheduled to be held in April 1992 may also be assigned the task to examine this issue and submit its recommendations to the next session of the Council of Ministers.

In conclusion, I would like to assure you, Mr. Chairman, of Pakistan's full cooperation and support in the conduct of your responsibilities and promoting the objectives and spirit of SAARC. We believe you have the vision, the wisdom, skill, and experience, and indeed the will and determination to guide and motivate us to work together toward a better tomorrow for South Asia. Thank you. [applause]

Indian Prime Minister

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[Speech by Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao to the SAARC summit in Colombo on 21 December—live]

[Text] Mr. Chairman, Your Majesty, Excellencies, distinguished guests. We are happy, Mr. President, to be here in your beautiful country. Ties woven by history bind our people. Our friendship today has strengthened them, our shared aspirations, given them vigor and direction. We thank the people of Sri Lanka and your government for the warmth of your welcome. To you, Mr. President, our felicitations on your assumption of the chairmanship of SAARC. You will have India's fullest cooperation in our mutual endeavor to strengthen SAARC on the basis of our charter.

To President Gayoom, our deep sense of appreciation for his contribution as chairman in imparting fresh thrust to our cooperation. He has discharged the high responsibilities with dedication, diligence, and determination. We are grateful.

Mr. Chairman, our world is being transformed before our eyes. South Asia may geographically seem at the periphery of this change, but it cannot allow itself to become peripheral. Opportunities for a more peaceful and prosperous world are within our grasp. Yet the danger of a return to the acquisitive politics of the 19th century cannot be ruled out. This makes imperative our effort for a world in which relations among nations will be based on equity, justice, and the rule of law within the framework of a more democratized United Nations. Power in its conventional sense cannot be balanced when nations are dependent. We must visualize instead a world where the individual power of nations aggregates to a common, collective global power which can address itself to the resolution of problems which have consistently preoccupied the mind of man. Such power must be defined not in indices of force or the strength of numbers but by the human and material potential with which each nation is blessed.

To develop, SAARC must adapt itself with vision and understanding to developments outside our region. Digressionist tendencies are clearly evident in world economies. World trade could well be fragmented, the international trading system undermined. We see the formation of regional blocs and groupings among developed countries. We are told that these groupings would be outward looking and would increase trade. But there is also the apprehension that the outcome could well be discriminatory, particularly in the medium and short term.

Developing countries need an alternative safeguard, an effective safeguard, and the means for furthering their development and strengthening their economies. Regional economic cooperation can help fulfill this need and provide some of these means. In this context, we attach great importance to cooperation within our region. Besides, the SAARC Charter declares that such cooperation shall not be a substitute for bilateral and multilateral cooperation but shall complement them. In fact, the two could be mutually enforcing. Development in our region and in our countries has been uneven. Our balances of payments are asymmetric, resources are constrained, pressures from inflation impinge upon us. These are some of the problems. Then there are the challenges. Poverty must be eradicated, and if that is to be, population growth must be limited. Literacy must empower our citizens to shape the development processes as full participants and not merely as witnesses or beneficiaries. Disease must effectively be prevented or cured; our air, land, and water must be made pure. Opportunities for and the means to a life worth living must be assured.

Our association has now been in exit.ence for six years. Its very first declared objective is the welfare of our people and the improvement of their quality of life. I do not intend to catalogue our achievements. These are several. Above all, the past six years have provided the means for us to learn from one another's experiences. This itself has been a rewarding experience. Progress has been made in the areas of functional cooperation identified at the successive summit meetings. But we can do more. Our operational activities must be geared and directed increasingly to development concerns that touch the lives of our people. More substantive areas must be identified for such cooperation. Only this can assure the realization of our objectives. Our cooperation must ascend to the truly regional as distinct from a mere sum total of bilateral arrangements.

We should not be diffident of newer forms of cooperation. Collective economic security can assure benefits not necessarily confined to the economic field. What we need is confidence between our people and between our governments to set in motion a benevolent cycle wherein cooperation strengthens confidence, which in turn makes for closer cooperation. Much of the world has already crossed the frontiers of technology at whose threshold we still wait in trepidation. Let us cross them together. Together we can raise the yield of crop and grain from our soil. Together postharvest technologies can invigorate our lands; together we can transform our agricultural wastes into energy; together we can make our industries technologically competitive. Our resources can be collectively harnessed to promote research, development, and implementation of new sources of energy, particularly solar energy. We are blessed bountifully by the sun. Our forefathers have written epics about it, our mothers have sung hymns in its praise. Before its energy and splendor we are but infinitesimal, and yet it has allowed us access to its power and strength. We cannot ignore it; we should not fail ourselves.

The majority of our populations still live in villages. SAARC will mean little to them either as an acronym or an idea unless they actually receive the results of our cooperation. I have in mind projects like rural drinking water and sanitation. This inevitably brings us to the promotion of public health. Our countries have a very rich tradition in traditional medicine and therapy. This tradition is rooted in the special conditions prevailing in our region. I am convinced that we can promote better health among our people if we can pool our experiences in traditional medicine and truly bring to bear the wisdom of our past on the compulsions of our future. Our officials could examine such ideas intended to facilitate and augment economic and technological cooperation among our countries. I am sure they will have the good sense to involve competent and experienced nonofficials as well.

SAARC is more than a grouping of governments, it is a partnership of people. The long-term vision of SAARC must undoubtedly include the removal of internal barriers and the free movement of goods, services, capital, and people throughout SAARC. Sheer necessity dictates that we do more in the area of intraregional commercial and economic exchange. Pooling of our resources can ensure their optimal utilization. We must not deny ourselves the advantages of geographical proximity. Great costs and energy consumption can be reduced. Wider access to consumers would break the shackles of

small markets and open the avenues for economies of scale. Joint ventures would help promote trade liberalization and encourage more detailed forms of economic cooperation. Adoption of increasingly outward-oriented trading regimes would lead to greater competitiveness of our economies. An important benefit would be increased contact across the borders at business and entrepreneurial levels which would mean the intensification of people-to-people-level contacts.

Half a century ago, Ananda Kumaraswamy had written of our region that the differences between its cultures are rather accidental than essential. The weight of these differences tends to disappear in proportion to our understanding and in the absence of any third party in whose interest it is to emphasize them. Even [word indistinct] to speak of unity is more essential and more important than any political unity based on common understandings of the ultimate ends of life rather than upon its immediate purposes. Standing here in Colombo, one is proud to be part of this fraternity that so eloquently stands testimony to that truth.

Mr. Chairman, after being six years in this association it is time to undertake new programs of joint action with vigor and with imagination—programs that strengthen us—because they promote our well-being. India is ready to respond to this need. To the extent that our talents and resources can benefit SAARC, we place them unreservedly at its disposal. Let us prove to the world, and more importantly to ourselves, that we are inheritors of a great past, but that we can be the heirs to a greater future. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. [applause]

Premadasa Addresses Closing Session

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[Address by Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa to the concluding session of the SAARC summit in Colombo on 21 December—"OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, Dec 21 (LANKAPUVATH)—Let me at the very outset thank Your Majesty and Your Excellencies for honouring Sri Lanka by participating in this summit. You have done so at very short notice. You have done so despite many other important preoccupations. Our agenda has been heavy. The time to deal with it has been short. Yet, I am happy to report that we have successfully and speedily accomplished our work. As we conclude our summit, we can all be content that SAARC has been strengthened. It has been strengthened as an organisation for regional cooperation. It has been reinforced as a means of developing close bilateral relations between our nations. It has been revamped as a means to enhance the quality of life of our people.

We have been able to make far-reaching decisions. They will enable us to make our association more businesslike and more efficient. We owe a special debt of gratitude to his excellency the President of Maldives for all he has done to initiate important reforms. Sri Lanka looks forward to welcoming the foreign secretaries of the association in Colombo next year to carry this process further. We have been able, at this summit, to move forward on some core-issues. We have developed a momentum towards greater economic cooperation among SAARC countries. We will be examining a proposal for the establishment of a South Asian preferential trade arrangement by 1997. Our inter-governmental group on economic cooperation will explore the full range of measures that will help develop greater and closer economic cooperation among the countries of South Asia. At the same time, we are all agreed that SAARC must not be isolated from the major political and economic trends that are sweeping the world. These have a major impact on South Asia. There are benefits to reap. There are dangers to avert. I have no doubt that the unity of purpose that is now developing in SAARC will help us to project our collective interests through joint action.

We are grateful to your majesty and your excellencies for your unstinted support for the proposal to provide adequate food and nourishment to the people of South Asia. We are grateful for the support you have given to Sri Lanka's own proposal to establish a South Asian commission on poverty alleviation. I look forward to receiving nominations from your governments so that the commission could be appointed without delay. We have been able to exchange views on a wide variety of issues. Our collective assessment of such issues as the environment will, I am certain, help each of our countries to benefit from the experiences of others. It will also help us in the important run-up to the UN conference on environment and development due to take place next year.

We have all been conscious that regional cooperation will give South Asia greater resilience in dealing with the unpredictable and fast moving pace of global economic change. We have also been conscious that South Asia's resources, particularly its human resources are an asset to the region. At the same time, it is an undeniable fact that our own financial resources may not be sufficient for the implementation of major regional projects that would benefit our people. We have been able to take steps towards the establishment of a fund for regional projects. We hope this could be developed as a viable instrument for harnessing resources from outside the region. Our own independence of operation and our identity as an association should not and need not be adversely affected by this. There are many other initiatives [as received]

Summit Declaration Reported

BK2112161091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 21 Dec 91

[Text] The SAARC countries have decided to set up a South Asia preferential trade arrangement by 1997. They have also agreed to take a joint position on the ongoing Uruguay Round of trade negotiations. The declaration adopted at the end of the one-day SAARC summit in Colombo today says that the seven member countries unanimously resolved to project a common South Asian

identity. The leaders agreed that development of a SAARC identity in international forums will enhance the credibility of the South Asian region. They expressed the importance of pooling common resources and expertise to devise local solutions to the region's problems.

Urging the need for reviewing the North-South dialogue in view of the close economic interdependence of nations, the summit impressed upon Western countries to adopt a balanced approach toward human rights and development. They said human rights are important but bringing the benefits of prosperity to the people is equally necessary. They described basic living standards as barometers of a good human rights record.

On regional problems, the summit resolved to coordinate efforts to wipe out the menace of terrorism and drug trafficking. The declaration said higher priority should be given to the protection of the environment, survival and development of children, and providing shelter to the people.

The leaders welcomed the setting up of a SAARC fund for regional projects managed by the regional council of development financing institutions. They also decided to work on the free SAARC travel document scheme to promote people-to-people contact. The leaders were of the view that the thrust of the entire exercise will depend on strengthening the SAARC itself to take effective decisions. A meeting of foreign secretaries will be held in Colombo in April next year to discuss the matter. They also welcomed the offer of Bangladesh to host the next SAARC summit.

Premadasa Briefs Media After Summit

BK2112163091 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 1528 GMT 21 Dec 91

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, Dec 21 (LANKAPUVATH)—Sri Lankan President Ranasinghe Premadasa, the new SAARC chairman, addressing a press conference at the presidential secretariat in Colombo this evening said his talks with Indian Prime Minister Narasinha Rao were cordial. There was hardly anything to discuss, except the question of the Sri Lankan refugees from India. Mr. Premadasa said in response to a question as whether the Sri Lankan Government was bitter when the proposed summit in November was not held said, "no bitterness. We always try to make things better. Bitterness is negative". His government looked at things positively, the president said.

Asked what would be his message to LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] Prabhakaran, President Premadasa said, "My message to Prabhakaran is to stop this unnecessary war and come to the negotiating table". He said the security forces had to protect the innocent people.

When a journalist said that both Nigeria and the Phillipines had started programmes based on President Premadasa's Janasaviya poverty alleviation programme, he said adopt was a good way of putting it, "as we ourselves are improving the programme every day."

In response to a question whether during his tenure of office he expected to establish to some point, a South Asian identity, the SAARC chairman stressed the need for regional cooperation, the harnessing of human and other resources for the development of the South Asian region and greatly increased trade between the SAARC nations. Reports on human rights were welcome, but Sri Lanka would not act according to the dictates of outsiders who tried to lay down pre-conditions for aid. Sri Lanka was more concerned about the human rights of her people than anyone else. But, Sri Lanka would not be dictated to by anyone. The Colombo declaration, too, made a reference to human rights and said human rights should not be viewed in narrow and exclusively political terms.

Indian, Pakistani Prime Ministers Discuss Kashmir

BK2112161691 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 21 Dec 91

[Text] The prime minister, Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, held 90 minutes of talks with his Indian counterpart, Mr. Narasimha Rao, this afternoon. During the talks it was agreed to maintain the spirit of Harare to address all issues, including Kashmir, through peaceful negotiations.

The secretary, foreign affairs, Mr. Shaharyar Khan, in a briefing said that in-depth discussions could not be held due to tight schedule of the SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] summit. But the Pakistan prime minister again stressed the importance of settling the Kashmir. He said the next foreign secretaries-level talks between India and Pakistan will be held in New Delhi in February next.

Algeria

Over 100,000 at FIS Election Rally in Algiers

LD2312202891 Paris Radio France International in French 1830 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Excerpts] [Announcer] The election campaign in Algeria officially ends at midnight tonight. [passage omitted] Out of all the competing parties the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] has decided to close its campaign with a huge rally in Algiers in the 5 July Olympic Stadium, the biggest gathering place in Algeria. Anne Dissez:

[Dissez] More than 100,000 people in a stadium bursting at the seams—in Algeria Islam is now just as big a success as soccer—in midweek, and in the middle of the day, the mobilizing force of the FIS was impressive. Very firm speeches were made punctuated by slogans, some of which have already enjoyed success, such as "Islamic Republic," and others which were new for this meeting, such as "With the Koran we will enter parliament." As a general rule the atmosphere was not one of tolerance, and to see this impressive crowd, of which it is clear that the leadership of the religious party can ask whatever it wishes, was not at all reassuring. Certainly, many participants, even according to the organizers, had been brought in from the provinces and in some cases from far away, but the barriers set up by the Gendarmerie along the access roads to the capital prevented quite a number of buses from reaching their destination. The FIS has once again proved its very great capacity for mobilization. No other party, not even the FLN, [National Liberation Front] has dared to organize a meeting in this enormous stadium, which has seats for more than 90,000 people. [passage omitted]

[Announcer] The first round of voting takes place next Thursday, 26 December. The second round will take place on 16 January. Note that voting operations began this morning in the province of Tamanrasset. It is a matter of permitting the nomad populations to vote thanks to mobile polling stations. The official responsible for voting in the region gives an assurance that all possible precautions have been taken to ensure that this process does not result in any fraud.

Egypt

Musa on Multilateral Talks, Europe, USSR

NC2312142391 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1300 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] Cairo, 23 Dec (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa, who attended President Mubarak's meetings with the Albanian and Bulgarian foreign ministers today, said that the two ministers discussed the situations in their countries, bilateral ties, the Middle East peace process, the situations in the Mediterranean, the Balkans, Yugoslavia, and the Soviet Union. He noted that there was a full exchange of views on these issues.

Musa added that Egypt is following the fast-breaking developments in these regions. He remarked that the situation in Yugoslavia is worrisome to all parties. Referring to Egypt's close and good relations with the Yugoslav nations, he voiced hope that matters will be settled in the way desired by the Yugoslav people and that the bloodshed will end.

He added: As for the Soviet Union, we issued a statement yesterday saying that we are following the situation there with great interest. We summoned our ambassador to Moscow to Cairo for consultations. This evening I will meet with some Foreign Ministry officials and our ambassador to Moscow to discuss the developments there.

He added: We are holding this meeting before taking any step on this issue. We must take into account the wishes of the people in the Soviet republics, because matters are in their hands, not ours. They are making the decisions about independence and we must respect this commonwealth or league, the formation of which was made in a clear manner. It also has been signed. For this reason, President Mubarak sent messages yesterday to the leaders of the 11 signatory republics. As I have said, the Soviet Union has ended and a new situation is developing. New foundations are being laid either for a league or for completely independent states.

On Bulgaria's offer to host the Middle East multilateral negotiations, 'Amr Musa said that many countries have expressed willingness to host the talks, but at any rate, the situation as it now stands is to hold the bilateral talks in Washington and the multilateral negotiations in Moscow at the specified dates. He pointed out that in case the situation changes, the parties must agree among themselves to hold the talks in another capital.

On Embassy in Moscow

NC2312192891 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1730 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] Cairo, 23 Dec (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has made a statement in response to a question on the Egyptian Embassy's status in Moscow. He said that the USSR's Embassy in Cairo has become the Russian Federation's Embassy; consequently, the Egyptian Embassy in Moscow has become its Embassy to the Russian Federation.

He added: We are taking into account the status of the new commonwealth. Egypt is trying to assess the situation and has summoned its ambassador to Moscow for consultations and for a review of the situation there. Egypt will make a decision in the next few days.

AL-AHRAM Editor on Sudan-Iran Cooperation

NC2312163591 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 21 Dec 91 pp 1, 3

[From Editor-in-Chief Ibrahim Nafi's "Calmly" column: "Al-Bashir, Rafsanjani and the Meeting of Leaders"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] The political isolation of the ruling regime in Sudan under Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir is a dual one. It is Arab isolation and international isolation as well. This has deprived the Sudanese ruling regime of any chance of obtaining economic assistance to help it face its structural economic crises, which have resulted from natural causes such as desertification and the spreading famine in a number of Sudanese provinces and districts.

The political isolation has resulted from two intertwined factors. The first is the nature of the ruling regime itself, which is hiding behind Islamic slogans and working to entrench religious concepts of leadership which are not acceptable in our contemporary age—when societies everywhere are seeking liberty, democracy, equality, and human rights and rejecting repression and control under any guise or slogan.

The second is the stand taken by the ruling regime during the Gulf crisis and Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. This stand affected Sudan's status as a regime and a country with the Arab peoples, especially in the Gulf countries. It also negatively affected the world's view of Sudan, and thus it lost whatever sympathy it had from some countries, sympathy which at times was translated into economic and humanitarian aid.

The regime's crisis in Sudan is not limited to the Arab and international aspects, but takes another dimension; namely, the failure to deal politically and militarily with the crisis in the south. There has been a complete loss of confidence between the Sudanese regime and the Sudanese People's Liberation Army [SPLA], led by John Garang, from the time the coup led by al-Bashir took place in July 1989 and al-Bashir's tendency to apply the so-called sharia law to the south and the north. This has ensured that the course of war would continue as the only instrument and ruled out the course of democratic dialogue to resolve the issue on bases that would satisfy all Sudan's sons.

There recently have been increased signs of the ruling Sudanese regime's failure to control the military situation in the south. The armed opposition has spread to other provinces in western Sudan such as the Darfur Province, where elements from Garang's movement have succeeded in penetrating and seizing control of some government military bases. This was a sign that the SPLA has started to spread to other provinces and to enter into alliances with the other Sudanese opposition movements, thus speeding up an all-out confrontation with the ruling regime. This new move by the SPLA indicates that the ruling regime lost its wager that the SPLA would become weak and feeble following the collapse of Ethiopian President Mengistu's regime and the end to the political and material aid he was giving the SPLA.

These moves have stressed the depth of the crisis facing al-Bashir's regime and his inability to continue to deal militarily with the crisis in the south without immediate military aid from outside the country. It appears that large-scale military cooperation between Iran and Sudan started some time ago and aimed at boosting the Sudanese military capabilities to confront Garang's movement, which was gaining strength. The military agreement the two sides intend to sign falls within this framework. According to the agreement, Iran will finance Chinese military deals with Sudan valued at more than $250 million. The deals involve fighter planes, various types of tanks, military and armored vehicles, missile launchers, and other medium-range artillery.

The military cooperation is not limited to the supply of weapons and financing their purchase. There is a more dangerous aspect, namely that of training. Elements from the Iranian Revolutionary Guards are training Sudanese elements in Sudan or Iran. It is known that the Revolutionary Guards were directly or indirectly responsible, together with the Lebanese Hizballah party, for the hostage crisis in Lebanon. It is the political-military establishment that reflects the most hard-line aspect of the Iranian regime and is the arm used to export the revolution. Thus, the neighboring countries' fears of military cooperation are justifiable.

Regarding the crisis in southern Sudan, it can be said that it is heading toward escalation and the Sudanese people will continue to give more blood and sacrifices for nothing. As to Sudan's regional relations, they in turn are heading toward increased tension and concern when they have not eliminated the signs of their former weaknesses and feebleness. Undoubtedly, the Sudanese regime is responsible for the anticipated tension. Instead of being the center of reconciliation, it insists on being the pit of tension and annoyance to its regional neighbors.

These were the Sudanese motivations. What are the motivations of Iran and its president?

The Gulf crisis has revealed how different states use diverse political methods of managing this world crises and of dealing with the regional and worldwide changes. The most prominent use of crisis management, in terms of maneuverability and a departure from stark ideology, was Iran's. They achieved some regional gains, such as the Iraqi regime's recognition of the 1975 agreement on the borders with Iran. Iran condemned the Iraqi military invasion of Kuwait because it posed a threat to its regional interests in the Gulf. It also condemned the foreign military presence in the region. Through this double, evasive, and opportunist stand, Iran sought to open the door to dialogue with the West and the United States to make a comeback to the world community from its isolation within its religiously extremist regime. All the while it would maintain its integrity and standing before the religious and fundamentalist groups in the Arab world that are trying to destroy the existing Arab political regimes. Some of these groups depend on the Iranian regime for political support and training to spread terrorism in the region and the world.

In terms of the internal struggle among the ruling religious groups, Rafsanjani succeeded in standing up to the extremists by saying that Iran's two-sided political stand

during the crisis served Iran's interests in the Gulf and the region. This stand was the same as that of the Sudanese regime, which is ruled behind the curtain by Hasan al-Turabi, leader of the National Islamic Front. Al-Turabi's stands and political interests are connected to the ruling regime in Iran on which he depends to consolidate his position in Sudan and within the framework of the Islamic political movements.

A review of the Iranian political moves since the start of the Gulf crisis shows that Iran has been trying hard to become the most influential power in the Gulf by trying to pressure Gulf countries into including it in the new Gulf security arrangements.

Iran is also trying to seek closer ties with Pakistan and the Afghan resistance groups in an attempt to strengthen its links with the Asian Islamic republics in the Soviet Union to cordon off the Gulf region. In addition, it is attempting to build a network of extensive relations with western Asia as part of the new Middle East order and as a substitute for the Arab order.

Following the weakening of the values of Arab unity and pan-Arabism, which Iran tried but failed to confront under the Shah's rule, the current religious regime in Iran is now trying to achieve the old ambitions of the Iranian empire under the Shah; namely, to break up the Arab order by separating the Gulf region and linking its security to Iran. These are part of Iran's attempts to influence the Arab east under the slogans of Islamic unity and Islamic state. Iran is taking advantage of the negative effects of the Gulf crisis and the wide-spread hatred of some Gulf sectors of the nationalist and Pan-Arab ideas raised by the ruling Ba'thist regime in Iraq.

Iran's strongest motivation in this move is to build centers of influence and create new alliances to expand its regional influence. This is particularly true because the Middle East peace process will result in a new order in the region in which Egypt and Turkey will play new roles. Iran wants to keep a foothold in and influence this new order.

Iran is trying to end its international isolation. The Iranian president attended the recent Islamic summit in Dakar and visited the Sudan. In addition, Iran is trying to send a message to Egypt that it is close to its southern border and another message to Saudi Arabia that it can influence regional stability and security via new, distinctive ties with Lt. Gen. al-Bashir's regime in Sudan.

It is also attempting to boost the status of the Sudanese National Islamic Front, Hasan al-Turabi's role in Sudan, and the regional role of Islamic political movements.

Iran is trying to vie with Egypt's regional and Arab role by raising the slogans of Islamic unity and hostility to the West—slogans which have failed due to the major developments of the new world order—and using Sudan as a base for training cadres from Islamic political movements worldwide.

Iran is seeking to play a more effective regional and Islamic role through Sudan before using this role as a bargaining chip to restore its ties with the West. It is also paving the way to turn Sudan into a substitute base for the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, which lost its bases in Lebanon due to the security changes there. Iran is also seeking to establish a political axis under Islamic slogans comprising Iran, Sudan, the Afghan resistance movements, and Islamic movements in numerous Arab countries such as Sudan, Algeria, and Yemen.

The Sudanese regime is trying to find external conduits to extricate itself from its numerous domestic crises and to end the regional and international isolation it has imposed on the country by its opportunist stand during the Gulf war and its diverse regional maneuvers which have brought no real benefit to its domestic stability or secured it any regional gains.

Hasan al-Turabi is playing a dangerous game in putting Sudan at risk by his maneuvers and his regional and international ambition of being crowned the incontestable leader of the international Muslim Brotherhood and other radical Islamic movements. He is trying to make Sudan a center for attracting leaders and cadres of these movements for purposes of training, leadership, and guidance. To achieve this goal he is utilizing the National Islamic Front's organizational channels with Islamic groups in the Arab world, Iran, and elsewhere. He is doing all this in order to assemble cards by which he imagines he can exert pressure on Egypt, Libya, and later on John Garang's movement.

He is also trying to sends signals to the Gulf and other Arab governments that he is a player in regional political stability and that Sudan is not a mere pawn in the Arab political game.

On the domestic front, al-Turabi is trying through his past and current relations with Iran to consolidate his status within the Sudanese regime in the face of the diverse Sudanese opposition forces. He is doing this through the National Islamic Front's economic and social institutions, through his influence inside official institutions including the army, and by establishing a private militia.

These are the objectives that Iran and Sudan are trying to achieve through the new axis that Hashemi-Rafsanjani and al-Bashir are trying to establish.

Where do the Sudanese people's interests lie in the context of these political calculations and ambitions?

Indeed, where do the Iranian people's interests lie in the context of these dreams of leadership and regional calculations?

May God help the Sudanese people in their plight that is caused by their rulers' actions and the ambitions that these rulers are trying to attain at the expense of the people's security, stability, and dignified life. Such a life would have been possible if they had not suffered the

calamity of being ruled by 'Umar al-Bashir and Hasan al-Turabi just as the Muslim Iranian people have suffered the calamity of being ruled by Hashemi-Rafsanjani and adventurers and tyrants of his ilk.

'Arafat Adviser Arrives To Discuss Peace Talks

NC2312183391 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1711 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] Cairo, 23 Dec (MENA)—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat's political adviser, arrived in Cairo from Amman this evening.

Upon his arrival, Sha'th said that he met with Jordanian Crown Prince Hasan in Amman to discuss the results of the first round of bilateral negotiations in Washington, adding that he also met with the Palestinian delegation members on their return from Washington and discussed preparations for the second round of talks, which will begin in Washington on 7 January.

Libya

Details of Alleged Attempted Coup Published

PM2312165891 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 23 Dec 91 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "Coup Attempt Foiled in Libya"]

[Text] London, AL-HAYAH—Reliable Arab sources in London have spoken about the failure at the end of November of a military coup attempt in Libya led by an officer and a civilian working for a ministry. The discovery of the attempt, which was intended to gain control of key positions in Tripoli, led to the arrest of scores of military personnel. Other Arab sources have spoken about the existence of secret contacts between the United States and a number of senior Libyan Army officers. These contacts are aimed at persuading them to topple Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, with a view to ending the unresolved problems between the two countries and opening a new chapter between Tripoli and Washington.

The sources said that a group of middle- and low-ranking officers of the Armed Forces were behind the failed coup attempt, which was destroyed a few hours before it was due to start, at dawn on Saturday 30 November.

They added that the military intelligence organs noticed suspicious movements in some of the barracks and military units around the capital throughout the day on Friday, 29 November, although it was a holiday. It was noticed that some officers were in their positions preparing for the deployment of tank battalions and artillery units. They said that scores of officers were arrested and interrogated immediately. Some of them admitted the plan, which was designed to take over the revolution command headquarters in the al-'Aziziyah area in the center of the capital and seize the staff command, Tripoli International Airport, and the radio station. They said that the investigations identified leaders of the failed coup, and it was discovered that they were headed by two people: an Army officer and a senior civilian official at the interior ministry, known in Libya as the Justice Ministry. They added that these two people were arrested.

The sources said that reports of the failed attempt, including the names of those involved in it, reached several Arab and foreign states.

Other Arab sources have revealed that since the eruption of the recent crisis there have been secret contacts between the U.S. Administration and senior military commanders in Libya. They added that the United States is encouraging the Libyan Army command to topple al-Qadhdhafi as a compromise acceptable to Washington, to end the recent crisis, and to settle all the unresolved issues between the two countries, because the United States holds Col. al-Qadhdhafi personally responsible for all the terrorist practices and problems between the two sides.

They said that the military leaders contacted by the United States are part of the Libyan Revolution Command and participated in all stages of the present regime, but enjoy a good reputation both at home and abroad. They added U.S. official circles regard them as an acceptable alternative to the Libyan leader's regime on the basis of their assessment of the Libyan internal and external opposition.

They added that despite its financing and embracing of the "Libyan National Salvation Front," Washington believes that it is incapable of assuming power. This, in addition to the Islamic tendency among some parties within it, which poses a threat to the region's future, especially if it allies itself with the Islamic movement in Sudan or with those that could accede to power in states adjacent to Libya, such as Algeria. The sources said that the United States embraces and looks after the "Islamic" Libyan opposition, but will not support it in seizing power. They added that it favors a national alternative from within the present regime—an alternative that makes gradual changes and pursues a moderate policy. It also believes that only the Army is qualified for that role, especially since it knows that the Libyan opposition parties do not enjoy influence among the people.

The same sources revealed that in the major Libyan cities large numbers of leaflets have been distributed recently by opposition groups, which shows that these groups are working to exploit the present dilemma facing the regime.

The sources said that Libyan citizens' response both to the regime and to the opposition's activities is characterized by extreme coolness and indifference. They added that they are not enthusiastic about supporting al-Qadhdhafi in his conflict with the Western states. In fact, in their daily discussions they express in one way or another their hopes for the regime's downfall. However, they cast doubt on the patriotism and credibility of the Libyan opposition, which is making moves from foreign capitals, with open support from the the Americans and British.

Al-Qadhdhafi Said To Fear Pro-Sudan Coup

PM2012142391 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 19 Dec 91 p 5

[Safa Ha'iri report: "Iranian Silkworm Missiles For Sudan"]

[Text] Paris—Arab sources have said that Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi fears a military coup against his regime following general discontent against the Libyan regime among Armed Forces personnel. The sources said that, in the light of this, Al-Qadhdhafi has ordered the transfer to remote military zones of a number of senior Army officers accused of making contacts with Sudanese military elements.

They added that Col. al-Qadhdhafi fears the transmission of the Islamic extremism infection to the forces of his army by virtue of the strong link between Libya and Sudan on the one hand and Sudan and Iran on the other.

In this context it is noted that the National Islamic Front dominates the present regime in Sudan. And it is believed that a number of senior officers, first and foremost Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, have a strong link with extremist Muslim Brotherhood elements, who dominate the Front.

And it has been noted that Iran has continued to strengthen its relations with Sudan since the defeat inflicted on Iraq and the decline in the activities loyal to it in southern Lebanon, that is in the hope that this might enable it to exploit Khartoum to have access to Muslim African states.

And although official media services in Tehran and Khartoum have been eager to maintain a blackout on the news concerning the military talks held by the delegation accompanying Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani during his recent visit to Khartoum, Iranian sources which accompanied Rafsanjani have said that Iran will grant Sudan arms worth $20 million, most of them Iranian-made and some Chinese-made. They are believed to include Silkworm surface-to-surface missiles assembled in Iran.

Japan's Call for Lockerbie Cooperation Questioned

LD2312103191 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0945 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] Tripoli, 23 Dec (JANA)— AFP reports that Japan has called on Libya to cooperate immediately with the United States and Britain in their investigations in the case of the American Pan Am plane crash.

Commenting on this, the JANA international affairs editor says that one cannot but feel surprised at such an attitude coming from Japan, which has suffered from the terrorism of power, and from the United States itself. He adds that frightful proof of the devastation the United States inflicted upon the Japanese people in terms of men, land, and buildings is still evident, particularly at Nagasaki and Hiroshima. Only recently the United States decided to affirm to the Japanese that it was not sorry for committing these historic crimes, for the U.S. Government reiterated it will not apologize for the atomic bombing of the two Japanese cities.

We expected a different attitude from Japan, which suffered from terrorism and felt its effects in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We expected something such as a declaration of solidarity with a small country that is being subjected to state terrorism, he says. However, he adds, while we express our surprise at this attitude, we do not blame Japan, because it has fallen under American pressure and is still paying the price for its defeat in World War II. Japanese goods are even being subjected to high customs tariffs before they are allowed to enter the United States.

Concluding his comments, the JANA editor affirms that the call for cooperation should be addressed to the United States and Britain. As to Libya, he adds, it has expressed its readiness on both the judicial and political levels to cooperate in all matters based on international law and UN charters, and has taken initiatives in this regard, which it announced to the world.

DPRK Cooperation Talks Open in Tripoli

LD2312111491 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1835 GMT 21 Dec 91

[Text] Tripoli, 21 Dec (JANA)—Committees formed following the eighth session of the joint Arab Libyan-Korean Committee for Cooperation started work this evening in Tripoli, with the aim of consolidating joint cooperation between the Great Jamahiriyah and the DPRK.

The Committee for Economic and Trade Affairs reviewed the development and furtherance of cooperation in the area of commercial exchange of goods, and also the possibility of setting up joint investment projects.

The Construction Committee reviewed the exchange of expertise in the spheres of communications, transportation, and cargo transport.

The Cooperation Committee discussed the possibilities for cooperation and the exchange of specialized experts in the spheres of marine wealth, health, and training, and the institution of joint cultural weeks between the two countries, and participation in fairs set up in the two countries.

Morocco

Foreign Minister on Maghreb Issues, Lockerbie

PM2312155991 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 20 Dec 91 p 5

[Interview with Foreign Minister Abdellatif Filali by Raghidah Dirgham in Dakar; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Dirgham] King Hassan II was noticeably absent from the Islamic summit in Dakar. He had promised that he would attend. Why was he absent?

[Filali] He was scheduled to attend but, most regrettably, some exceptional circumstances in Morocco made it impossible for him to leave. Ongoing contacts with the UN secretary general on the situation in the (Western) Sahara and preparations for the referendum necessitated the king's presence in Morocco. There was no connection between his absence from the conference and Moroccan-Senegalese relations, which are historical relations.

[Dirgham] Have your efforts to hold a referendum reached a deadlock?

[Filali] Not at all. Consultations are under way and there are various proposals regarding the identity of those who will take part in the referendum, but that does not mean deadlock. [passage omitted]

[Dirgham] Do you believe that the commitment to the cease-fire is threatened at this point? Is there a definite undertaking that a collapse of the cease-fire would not be allowed?

[Filali] Everyone has been observing the cease-fire since September. There is no problem with the United Nations or anyone else regarding that matter.

[Dirgham] Is Morocco satisfied with the role played by Algeria on the Sahara issue?

[Filali] Algeria is an observer, like Mauritania. That problem does not directly concern Algeria. The issue reflects on the region, naturally, and that should be taken into consideration. It reflects on Algeria in its capacity as a neighboring state, but Algeria has nothing to do with the peace plan or its implementation. [passage omitted]

[Dirgham] There is a crisis in Algeria. It is going through a difficult period and has problems with fundamentalists and the Islamic trend. Tunisia also has problems with the fundamentalist trend. What threat does that trend pose to you in Morocco? Do you fear that what is happening in Algeria and Tunisia may spread to Morocco?

[Filali] We are watching what is taking place in Algeria with extreme interest, particularly as the (legislative) elections approach. We always endeavor or wish for the Algerian brothers to overcome the problems facing them. We have confidence in the wisdom of President Chadli Bendjedid and those dealing with him. Everyone, even in other Algerian circles, is aware that the country is facing a difficult situation, but overcoming these problems is what is important. We hope that the elections will provide a good opportunity for national accord that would be in the interests of Algeria and the Arab Maghreb. A lack of stability in Algeria or any other Maghreb state adversely affects the entire Maghreb group.

[Dirgham] What about the fundamentalist trend in Morocco?

[Filali] Thank God, so far we have no fundamentalist trend. We have individuals who may have fundamentalist tendencies. Morocco is not a closed society. In practical terms, there is no such thing as a fundamentalist party or a fudamentalist trend. [passge omitted]

[Dirgham] The Arab Maghreb Union [AMU] foreign ministers conference discussed Libya's crisis with the United States and Britain. What has become of the diplomatic efforts to settle the matter peacefully?

[Filali] Morocco has no special role to play in this matter. As a Maghreb group, we exchange views. All the Maghreb states have expressed solidarity (with Libya) and wish the crisis a peaceful resolution. We hope that the efforts exerted by Arab and non-Arab sides could eliminate the solutions based on military intervention or on (imposition of) economic sanctions. Our basic position is one of condemnation of what happened to the Pan Am and the French airliners. We firmly condemn all forms of terrorism. We in Morocco fight terrorism with all available means. On this particular crisis we want to know the facts and would like the investigations to unearth the ultimate truth.

[Dirgham] Do you urge Libya to hand over the two men accused of bombing the U.S. airliner to the U.S. or British authorities or to an Arab state, or do you propose another formula to Libya for a peaceful settlement of the crisis?

[Filali] The Arab League's resolution is clear in its support for an international commission with U.S. and British participation. [passage omitted]

*Banks Trying To Attract Libyan Investment

92P40088 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 14 Dec 91 p 9

[Text] Moroccan financial sources mentioned that some Moroccan banks hastened to contact Libyan financial organizations in Tripoli to convince them of the importance of depositing a portion of the money which the Jamahiriyah intends to withdraw from Western banks to deposit in Moroccan banks. The reports had pointed to the transfer of Libyan deposits from a number of European banks in light of the recent crisis between Libya and the United States, Britain, and France.

Western Sahara

Referendum on Self-Determination Postponed

LD2012233791 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2300 GMT 20 Dec 91

[Text] The referendum on Western Sahara self-determination has been postponed to the coming months because of the difficulty of finding criteria to determine the identity of the Sahraouis. UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar broke the news yesterday in a report he submitted to the Security Council. Perez de Cuellar expressed his regret about the resignation from his mission of Johannes Manz, his special envoy to Western Sahara.

Kuwait

Cabinet Discusses Economic Measures

NC2112095591 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1700 GMT 19 Dec 91

[Text] The Council of Ministers held an extraordinary meeting at the Prime Ministry General Secretariat headquarters this morning, chaired by Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, heir apparent and prime minister, to discuss the country's economy, measures to prop it up, and propel the wheel.

After the meeting, Dhari 'Abdallah al-'Uthman, minister of state for cabinet affairs, said that in line with the cabinet's policy of dealing with the country's major issues and laying down foundations to tackle them, curbing their negative impact—proceeding from the attention his highness the heir apparent and prime minister gave to the economic issue within the context of efforts he began several months ago with officials and specialists to promote economic activity and restore the economy to the status it enjoyed before it was affected by the evil Iraqi aggression against Kuwait—the cabinet discussed the economy, various sectors' problems, ways to deal with them, and create favorable conditions to improve the national economy and consolidate and develop various sectors' performance. [passage indistinct]

He said that the cabinet discussed practical measures and fundamental bases for accomplishing this goal now, in the future [words indistinct] restoring health and vitality to all services, vital facilities, and primary economic activities, according to a series of [word indistinct] contributing to correcting the economic path and asserting its role in building the Kuwaiti man and developing his capabilities. He noted that these bases include enhancing the private sector's role and positive participation in all fields and areas to secure more investment opportunities in this sector, to improve the economy's performance, to raise the standard of the country's public services, and to meet the citizens' aspirations in this respect.

These bases also include perpetuating a policy on the economy that will be open to the outside world, benefiting from its experiences and contributions, and revising and modernizing pertinent laws and legislation according to the requirements and facts of the new stage.

Al-'Uthman added that the cabinet also discussed practical measures to help small businessmen, tradesmen, farmers, and others whose already limited activities were halted when their properties and installations were looted and destroyed. These measures involve coordinating with local banks to set up a fund financed by the banks to provide easy-term loans enabling these people to resume their businesses. The measures also include setting up companies for Kuwaiti tradesmen who would eventually own them.

He said that the cabinet discussed measures to deal with problems facing the real estate sector, which affects a large cross-section of Kuwaiti individuals and families whose livelihood depends on investment in it. These measures include the state's buying landed properties in areas due to be reorganized in return for issuing title deeds to help them repay their potential debts and enable them to pursue activities contributing to the economy. [break in reception]

He added that the cabinet also discussed the business sector's conditions and impediments and the industrial sector, hoping to reach a clear industrialization strategy in line with general goals and approaches [words indistinct].

On another level, the minister said that the cabinet reviewed the conditions of the animal and fishing [words indistinct] and proposals to rearrange and improve its performance alongside other economic sectors. The cabinet agreed to bless these approaches and ask the authorities to do what is necessary to achieve this [words indistinct].

As part of the efforts to prop up the national economy, al-'Uthman pointed out that the cabinet discussed the final report of the committee set up by his highness the heir apparent and prime minister to study the problem of hard debts and reorganize the banking and financial agency. The cabinet reviewed the report's recommendations, discussing it [break in reception] eager to promote the national economy and proceed from the banking and financial sector's important role in motivating the economic cycle, enabling the sector to exercise its vital role in economic development in various fields and with a view to solving this problem objectively and scientifically, saving the sector and maintaining domestic and international confidence in it.

Asserting the government's concern over public funds and preserving them to achieve the contribution of all [words indistinct] to shoulder their responsibilities and share [word indistinct], the cabinet agreed that the government, through its representative, would buy the aggregate total of the hard debts Kuwaiti clients owed to local banks, the Kuwaiti financing house, and investment companies so that these debts would be transferred to them with all their physical and [word indistinct] collateral in return for bonds. The government's representative will follow up the repayments and do what is necessary to secure the [words indistinct]. The rescheduling of purchased debts will be based on the debtors' and guarantors' financial status. Also, [words indistinct] based on these financial [words indistinct] and the interest rate on each debt on condition that the rescheduling period does not exceed [words indistinct] (?three) years [passage indistinct].

AL-ANBA' Resumes Local Publication

NC2112131891 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0814 GMT 21 Dec 91

[Text] Kuwait, 21 Dec (MENA)—The Kuwaiti newspaper AL-ANBA' resumed publishing in Kuwait today for the first time since the country's liberation.

AL-ANBA', which has the largest circulation of any Kuwaiti paper and whose chief editor is Walid Khalid al-Marzuq, established its headquarters in Cairo after the Iraqi invasion and was published there until 10 August 1991.

Saudi Arabia

King Fahd Receives Syria's Basil al-Asad

JN2312130891 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] Riyadh—King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, monarch of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, last night received Staff Major Basil al- Asad. Riyadh radio said that the meeting was attended by Staff Major General Prince Mut'ib Bin-'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, commander of the King Khalid military college and deputy commander of the military organ of the National Guard.

Yemen

Iranian Parliamentary Delegation on Visit

Karrubi, Nu'man, Confer

LD2212111291 Tehran IRNA in English 0648 GMT 22 Dec 91

[Text] Sanaa, Dec. 22, IRNA—Iran's Majles speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Mehdi Karrubi and his Yemeni counterpart Yasin Nu'man discussed regional issues including the Palestinian problem in their first round of talks here Saturday night. Karrubi who arrived here Saturday from Canton, China, voiced concern over presence of foreign forces in the Persian Gulf and stressed that regional security must be maintained by regional states. He appealed for unity of Islamic countries and said the Palestinian problem was a problem for all Muslims. He expressed hope that the unity of the two Yemens would be beneficial for the world of Islam. The two sides called for formation of the joint Iran-Yemen economic commission. Parliamentary cooperation and formation of Iran-Yemen friendship group were also discussed. Present in the meeting were Iran's Ministers of Commerce 'Abdol Hoseyn Vahaji, Construction Jihad Gholam Reza Foruzesh, deputy foreign minister and Majles deputies as well as their Yemeni counterparts.

Al-'Attas Receives Iranian

JN2212131391 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 22 Dec 91

[Text] Prime Minister Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas today received Iranian Majles Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Mehdi Karrubi and the delegation accompanying him. The two sides discussed relations between the fraternal countries in all fields of cooperation and means of promoting them. Both sides expressed their desire to further promote these fraternal relations in the interest of the two fraternal peoples' interests, and in a way to reinforce joint cooperation and to serve the Islamic nation's objectives of cooperation, development, and progress.

Brother Rashid Muhammad Thabit, minister of state for Council of Representatives affairs; brother Yahya 'Abdallah Qahtan, Council of Representatives member; our country's ambassador to Tehran; and the Iranian ambassador to Sanaa attended the meeting.

Salih Comments on Talks

JN2212214091 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 22 Dec 91

[Text] Brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council, today received Iranian Majles Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Mehdi Karrubi and his delegation. Brother 'Ali Salim al-Bid, vice chairman of the Presidential Council, and Dr. Yasin Sa'id Nu'man, speaker of the Council of Representatives, attended the meeting.

During the meeting, they discussed issues of interest to fraternal relations and ways of promoting cooperation and coordination to serve the interests of the two fraternal peoples and the objectives of the Islamic nation.

They also reviewed developments pertaining to the regional and international arenas, as well as issues of interest to the Islamic nation, primarily the Palestine question and the efforts of the two fraternal countries to promote solidarity and achieve unity of Islamic ranks.

The brother speaker of the Islamic Majles conveyed to the brother president the greetings of his brother President 'Ali Hashemi-Rafsanjani of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Iranian leadership's congratulations on the achievement of the historic Yemeni unity. The speaker of the Iranian Majles pointed out that Yemeni unity is a great gain for the Islamic nation and a nucleus for the Islamic unity that is sought by all Muslims. He also expressed the happiness of the Iranian people and leadership over this achievement, an achievement that lends strong support to the Arab nation to face the challenges imposed upon it. He underlined the important, vital role played by the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Yemen in achieving and bolstering security and stability in the region. He asserted Iran's eagerness to promote and to develop its fraternal relations with the Republic of Yemen in all areas in an effort to serve the interests of the Islamic nation and to preserve security and peace in the region. He also indicated that there are many common denominators and identical views between the two countries with regard to various issues of interest pertaining to their bilateral fraternal relations and the Islamic nation. Furthermore, he expressed his thanks for the warm welcome he and his delegation received during their visit to our country.

For his part, the brother president expressed his welcome to the brother speaker of the Iranian Majles and his delegation and his appreciation for the good, brotherly

feelings of the Iranian brothers toward the unity of the Yemeni homeland. He asserted that Yemeni unity will always be an element of security, stability, and peace in the region. He also stressed that Yemeni unity is a strong tributary for bolstering Islamic solidarity and the strength of the Islamic nation in the face of challenges.

The brother president, moreover, (?praised) the level of development reached by Yemeni-Iranian relations. He asserted the eagerness and readiness of the Republic of Yemen to promote its relations with its brothers in Iran and to expand the areas of cooperation between the two fraternal nations.

The brother president asked the speaker of the Iranian Majles to convey his greetings to his brother President 'Ali Hashemi-Rafsanjani and to the Iranian leadership. He wished for the achievement of even more progress in the existing brotherly relations.

The meeting was attended by brother Muhammad Ahmad Sulayman, minister of housing and urban planning; the Yemeni ambassador to Iran, and the Iranian ambassador to Sanaa.

Responding to a question by the Iranian television mission after the meeting on the nature and outcome of the talks held with brother Hojjat ol-Eslam Mehdi Karrubi, the brother chairman of the Presidential Council said: First of all, we are happy with the visit of the Majlis speaker and his delegation, which is composed of parliamentarians and ministers. Our talks focused on Yemeni-Iranian relations, which are constantly growing through the exchange of visits between the two countries at the highest levels. There are other plans to develop and to promote relations between the two Muslim fraternal countries in cultural, economic, and technical fields. There is also a mutual desire to promote and to develop these relations. As for the political arena, there are common denominators between Iran and Yemen at the international level.

Saddam on Economic Blockade, U.S. Position

JN1812195791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1845 GMT 18 Dec 91

[Text] Baghdad, 18 Dec (INA)—His Excellency President Saddam Husayn has said: My confidence in humanity remains high under all circumstances and conditions, because the God, the Great and Almighty, is capable of lighting dark corners in the psyches of the overwhelming majority of mankind. Glory be to Him; He illuminates the hearts of those whom He loves and guides them along the straight path. As for those whose hearts Satan has made its dwelling place, the Almighty God will not bestow on them the light of certainty.

These remarks were made today when His Excellency President Saddam Husayn met with German national Silka Hottman, and her fiancee Dr. Ahmad Salih Sultan.

Addressing the German woman, who has staged a sit-in and a hunger strike to protest the blockade imposed on our people, his excellency the president said: You have turned the face of mankind white. Hence, the pride the Iraqis have taken in your stand was great and strong. That is why many people are walking in your footsteps right now.

His Excellency President Saddam Husayn added: The unfair blockade being imposed on us right now is a continuation of the aggression; a chapter complementing it. As for our resistance to the blockade, it is a continuation of the jihad we waged under war circumstances. The blockade is a test for the psyches of some people, a process of further strengthening the mettle of the people in whose hearts faith has been embedded. Hence, we praise God for everything. Our confidence in the future is great and strong.

His excellency the president went on to say: The Almighty God is capable of everything. He could have conveyed His message through messengers using the easiest possible ways. However, Glory to God, He opted for the hard ways, even when things involved messengers, for a lesson meant to be taught.

The unbelievers imposed a siege on the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, and his believer companions in Mecca for three years. God the Almighty could have steered His messenger and the believers away from this siege, but He wanted their souls to be cleansed and their faith strengthened. He also wanted to expose the unjust by unveiling their inhuman nature.

Now what values do those who attacked Iraq have to prop up their sagging morale? What masks do they have to hide their evil intentions? Their slogans about childhood and motherhood have fallen. Their slogans about the care for the elderly and about human rights, the freedom of the press, and democracy in general have also fallen.

President Saddam Husayn said: The last arrow in their quiver is that the head of the biggest state, which claims that it is the pioneer of democracy, has asked the Iraqi military to stage a coup in Iraq. This is despite the fact that this president never ceases to talk about democracy. It is a simple and axiomatic principle that military coups are not in harmony with democratic practices; indeed, they and democracy are poles apart. The U.S. President fights military coups in other countries when the armies in those countries move against his agents who rule in the name of democracy. At the same time, he calls for staging coups against genuine democratic systems when their leaders are not agents and hirelings.

While they stage the aggression against Iraq under the pretext that it militarily occupied a neighboring country, they add to the Israeli arms arsenal so that the Zionist entity can—through a tangible, practical capability—entrench its occupation of the Arab territory and Palestine. The U.S. Administration employs arms instead of the dialogue to face the glorious Iraq, but when the matter concerns Israel's occupation of the Arab lands and Palestine, they shout in public: "The United States will not impose a solution on any one. Solution can be achieved through dialogue."

President Saddam Husayn said: I bring up part of the facts to serve as a necessary background to get to other meanings, although I am confident that you know all these paradoxes, and even contradictions between what they do and say. Back to the same point, through this blockade and its continuation after the aggression, God Almighty wanted to expose the tyrants and infidels at this time, like he exposed the tyrants and infidels through the siege they imposed on our master the prophet of God and his virtuous companions.

His excellency said: As for the future, we do not see a dark road ahead of us before we reach it, because we have confidence in the faith of the faithful people. The faithful first lights up his heart and self, and then starts to light up the road for the others. Many of the Western officials have lost their humanity after the age of the true leadership in the West has gone and was replaced by the leadership of the corporations' representatives. The time when all humanitarian values are brought up in the systems of government has also gone, and the Western leader no longer believes in supreme values or seeks to achieve power to apply these values. Instead, he began to assume power only for the sake of it, or to assume power to represent the corporations. The ruler in the West no longer represents the people, despite all the superficial means of representation, but he is a representative of the monopolies.

President Saddam Husayn also said: In the United States, there are 20 million displaced people, who have no homes, jobs, or food. How can its ruler claim that he represents the people and that he is the president of a rich country?

The rise of many officials to power in the West takes place step by step, in calculated stages, and with the support of the companies. Only those who are able to

compete with the candidates of rich companies, which also have other means, succeed. When we allow equal opportunities and propaganda for all candidates in your country, Iraq, and when all candidates are financed by the state, officials in the West and their media say that this is not democracy.

The most important thing is that we have strong faith, and it becomes stronger when difficulties increase. By faith I mean faith in Almighty God, faith in humanity and its just rights, and faith that no one can deprive us of our rights, which God granted us.

We are dealing with the present and future in confidence based on faith, and we do not view our people's rights in isolation of humanity's rights.

His excellency the leader president said: To achieve equality among people, it is not enough for them to stand at a start line. If they were to stand at a starting line, many opportunities could be wasted at later stages, and consequently many rights could be squandered. Therefore, equal opportunities must be secured for all, along the entire track. Hence, the people's leadership is responsible for correcting each and every anomaly or deviation from principles and proper conduct from the starting line, and along the whole track in a manner that would safeguard the rights bestowed on man by God. This responsibility does not, however, mean that the state should become a heavy cover preventing man from fulfilling his humaneness and fettering his creative spirit.

His excellency the president added: Life does not stop, and does not wait for he who desires postponement. It is sufficient for man to perform his duties before God and for His sake. Intellect is active in its own domain, the Army is being trained, humanitarian societies are conducting their work, the industry is experiencing a development, agriculture is prospering, music overflows, poetry blossoms, and the Iraqi individual is fighting, building, singing, and marrying. Thus, life always looks new. This is what God wants it to be for man.

Concluding his address, leader President Saddam Husayn said: The anguish will be removed with God's help. Abundant rain will fall, and darkness will vanish. I would even venture to say that the covers of darkness have crumbled because the Iraqis have been patient. So, God will reward them. God is with the patient.

Defense Minister on Democracy, Army Affairs

JN2212201291 Baghdad AL-QADISIYAH in Arabic 21 Dec 91 p 3

[Text] Staff Lieutenant General 'Ali Hasan al-Majid, Revolution Command Council member and defense minister, received Hani Wahib, editor-in-chief of the newspaper AL-QADISIYAH, last Thursday [19 December].

His excellency praised the role of this newspaper in the political, media, and military areas.

He referred to the distinguished role the newspaper should play in the ideological structure of the Armed Forces in light of comrade leader Saddam Husayn's instructions and his belief that ideological education is the most important weapon in the Army.

In his statement, the minister also touched upon a very significant issue, one which has been of deep interest to leader President Saddam Husayn since the years of 1976 and 1977. This is the issue of democracy in the Armed Forces. The minister said that we apply democracy in the Army, which is a vital part of the people, through inspiration derived from our Arab Islamic heritage in the era of the Islamic message and by seeking guidance from the following divine verse: And consult them in affairs of moment. Then, when thou hast taken a decision, put thy trust in God. [Koranic verse] Our great Arab Socialist Ba'th Party also derives inspiration from its democratic thought and from its application of the principle of central democracy in organizations. Dialogue and the freedom of expression lie in consultation, and when a sound opinion surfaces, the leader should decide and trust in God.

The minister added that, as part of the military efforts currently under way, the opinions of commanders and fighters are being explored with regard to their military specialties in order to reach a unified, central opinion based on a sound, constructive democratic process; to reinforce our brave Army's combat capability; and to raise the morale of the fighters.

It is natural that democratic practice in the Armed Forces should take place within the military discipline without encroaching on the fundamentals and meanings of that discipline.

During my tour of the 1st Army Corps operations theater, he added, one of the field commanders suggested that a certain change in his formation be made. The suggestion was discussed in a democratic spirit, with the opinions of the other commanders and fighters also being explored. As the suggestion did not win the approval of the majority, we did not adopt it. But by this procedure, we wanted to promote the spirit of democratic discussion with regard to military action in order to make the best central decision based on democracy.

In this context, and to enhance the exercise of democracy, the minister instructed that AL-QADISIYAH publish the complaints and views of fighters. He said that this serves the tasks of our current phase of jihad and the aspirations of our Armed Forces.

He instructed that fighters' mail to AL-QADISIYAH from their units be delivered through the military mail system. His excellency also instructed that AL-QADISIYAH conduct interviews with fighters and commanders, and that it publish their sound and varied views which pour forth in the stream of building our heroic Armed Forces both ideologically and technically.

Defense Minister Staff Lt. Gen. 'Ali Hasan al-Majid stressed that lists of discharged officers and those of other ranks will be periodically published by the AL-QADISIYAH newspaper. Details of each forthcoming discharge and everything pertaining to it will be published in order to inform fighters of their discharge on time. He said that this affirms the interest of the leadership of the party and revolution, headed by President Saddam Husayn, in the draftees of our valiant Army as an effective part of our gallant people. This will serve to boost the march of jihad and reconstruction and to secure a proud life under the banners of glory.

He said: We have begun to discharge the 31st and 32d classes of reserve conscript officers. They will be discharged today, Saturday [21 December], having performed their duties and national and pan-Arab tasks well and in a manner that embodies the most sublime formulas of true citizenship and an honorable military spirit.

Other classes will be discharged successively within the next few weeks.

He said that the procedures for the discharge of draftees of other ranks are continuing in accordance with a timetable set for this purpose. Dates of discharge will be made public later, given that the fighters have performed their noble role in defending the homeland, Iraq's sovereignty, and the Arab nation's dignity.

His excellency said: The measures of discharging the holders of doctorate and master degrees have been completed following the issuance of Amendment 31 of the amended Military Service Law No. 65 of 1969, which stipulates that their military service is to be four months instead of 24 months. This proposal was put forth by the Defense Ministry and approved by the leadership.

It may be recalled that, upon a proposal from the Defense Ministry, the National Assembly discussed a reduction in the compulsory service for graduates of colleges and higher educational institutions from 24 to 18 months and that the Assembly recommended amending the Military Service Law accordingly.

The minister also recommended that news of promotions and the honoring of outstanding personnel be covered by the media and that special cases of courage and heroism in defending Iraq and preserving its security and independence be highlighted.

The minister referred to the privileges leader President Saddam Husayn had bestowed on the officers and men of our brave Army, indicating the president's care to ensure legitimate incentives for our brave fighters for their generous sacrifices in defending Iraq's sovereignty and the Arab nation's dignity. Within this framework comes the leadership's concern to grant material and moral privileges to new volunteers in the various units of the Armed Forces, to strengthen our brave Army's combat and technical ability, to maintain it as the shield of Iraq and the nation on the same level as that of modern, technologically, and scientifically advanced armies, and to rely on educated and enlightened young men who can assume their duties with high efficiency and performance.

The defense minister noted that the leader President Saddam Husayn's gesture to release loans and real estate grants to military personnel under these particular circumstances demonstrates his excellency's care to provide decent housing and the best living conditions for the brave fighters. He added that the necessary funds have been earmarked for this purpose.

The minister pointed out that the Defense Ministry has begun to implement the orders of President Saddam Husayn, may God preserve him, to provide cash alternatives instead of a car for the families of martyrs, both officers and men—volunteers, draftees, and reservists—and to begin implementing the president's order for the families of those martyrs with Valor Awards granted in 1988, 1987, 1986, and the years preceding this.

The interview was attended by Muhammad al-Hayyani, the minister's press secretary.

Minister Asks UN To Reject U.S. 'Designs'

JN2412090391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0831 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] The United Nations, 24 Dec (INA)—Iraq has asked the UN secretary general to shoulder his international and legal responsibilities by rejecting the U.S. Administration's designs against the Iraqi people and their nationalist government, and halting its determination to interfere in their domestic affairs in implementation of its suspect policy.

In a message sent to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar, Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn said: "Maintaining silence on such contradictory policies and the double interpretation of the UN Charter and international legitimacy by the United States will have dire consequences on the world body and the future of the peoples who made sacrifices to vindicate their independence, freedom, and dignity."

In his message, the foreign minister noted a report published by THE NEW YORK TIMES on the military options considered by the Joint Chiefs of Staff over the past three weeks regarding intervention in Iraq's affairs, and the statements made by U.S. President Bush, saying: "The U.S. President's policy has entered the phase of practical implementation, and of making preparations for the use of military force against Iraq."

In the message, which was handed to the UN chief by the permanent Iraqi representative to the United Nations yesterday, Ahmad Husayn termed these malicious intentions of the U.S. policy, and these moves and statements, as "things that show malevolent intentions and run counter to the basic objectives and principles enshrined

in the UN Charter," particularly Article 2 of Paragraph 4, which stipulates that UN members must refrain, in their international relations, from the use of force or the threat to do so against the territorial integrity or political independence of any member state, and that they should also not engage in acts that are contrary to the goals of the United Nations.

The foreign minister stressed that the measures and scenarios currently being considered in the U.S. Administration's corridors, as revealed by THE NEW YORK TIMES, show that "preparations are underway for using military force against Iraq, and also that the Iraqi Armed Forces' personnel are being instigated to rebel against the existing authority."

Ahmad Husayn affirmed that "this runs counter to the rules of international law and international norms, not to mention that it constitutes a crude departure from correct conduct in international relations."

In his message, Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn added: "The U.S. Administration is persisting in its policy of intervention in Iraq's domestic affairs in contravention of its commitments as a permanent member of the Security Council regarding nonintervention in the domestic affairs of a sovereign member and founder of the United Nations. This administration is also threatening Iraq's security, safety, independence, and its people's political choices."

The foreign minister expressed his confidence in Iraq's capability, and ridiculed the U.S. military options against Iraq, saying: "We trust our people, our Armed Forces, and their patriotism and integrity."

Opposition Group 'in Baghdad' Issues Statement

JN2312192491 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1900 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] The Democratic Gathering for the Salvation of Iraq [al- tajammu' al-dimuqrati li inqadh al-'iraq] has given Saddam Husayn two months to step down and leave Iraq. This came in a statement issued in Baghdad by the gathering, which includes underground opposition elements in Iraq as well as parties participating in the government.

The statement calls for establishing a provisional body to assume power and give the people an opportunity to choose a new regime.

State Contact Banned With Former Defense Minister

NC2212162191 (Clandestine) Voice of the Iraqi People in Arabic 1300 GMT 22 Dec 91

[Text] Reports from Baghdad indicate that orders have been issued banning former Defense Minister Husayn Kamil from entering state ministries and departments.

The reports add that the officials in the ministries have been told not to have any contact with Kamil.

Tzomet Quits Coalition Over Direct Election Law

TA2412092691 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] Tzomet is bolting the coalition, and Minister Eytan has handed the prime minister his letter of resignation. Agriculture Minister Refa'el Eytan made an announcement to this effect after a meeting with Prime Minister Shamir, in which Eytan wished to know whether the Likud Knesset members would be required to vote against the direct election of the prime minister in the wake of the Likud Central Committee resolution opposing direct election.

Our correspondent Nava Kohen reports that Minister Eytan read from a written statement. He said that the prime minister believes that the central committee resolution does not contradict the agreement with Tzomet regarding the Likud members' freedom of vote on the election of the prime minister. Minister Eytan added, however, that the prime minister refused to make a public clarification to this effect, as a result of which he handed Mr. Shamir his letter of resignation from the cabinet. The resignation becomes valid within 48 hours.

Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Arrives

TA2312194491 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] The Chinese vice foreign minister arrived in Israel tonight on a visit, our political correspondent Gadi Sukenik has learned. [Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English at 1800 GMT on 23 December identifies the official as Yang Fuchang, "vice foreign minister responsible for the Middle East and Africa" and a former "ambassador in one of the Gulf States."] The visitor will meet tomorrow with the prime minister and foreign minister. He is due to be guest of honor tonight at a dinner given by a small group of Foreign Ministry officials.

Our correspondent says that this is the first visit to Israel by a senior Chinese personality, after previous visits, some secret, by lower-level officials. The Chinese demanded that the visit be kept secret. The visit follows a rapprochement in relations between the two countries, but it is still unclear when the Chinese plan to form full diplomatic relations with Israel and whether the disclosure of the visit would make that more difficult.

Israel has a small representation in Beijing, which officially serves as a scientific academic institution, although senior Foreign Ministry officials were recently officially received by the PRC Government.

Confers With Shamir, Levi

TA2412114291 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1100 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] The Chinese vice foreign minister is now conferring with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir. Earlier, he conferred with Foreign Minister David Levi on Israeli-PRC relations and the peace process. Our political correspondent Natan Gutman reports:

Even after his photograph was published in the press, Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Yang Fuchang insists on a strange aura of mystery. When he was about to leave the meeting with Foreign Minister David Levi, Yang saw a group of photographers standing far off and refused to leave until they were removed.

The Chinese official met with David Levi and senior Foreign Ministry officials for 90 minutes. The talk was termed productive. Two main issues featured the Middle East peace process and Israeli-PRC relations. On the peace process, the Chinese did not raise the PRC's request to participate in the multilateral stage of the talks, although that issue is still expected to be raised. On bilateral issues, Levi and Yang reached several agreements that are still being kept secret. A date for the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries has not yet been reached.

The Chinese vice foreign minister is now conferring with Prime Minister Shamir and is due to leave Israel tonight or tomorrow.

Cabinet Considers Peace Talks, Lebanon

TA2212124391 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1105 GMT 22 Dec 91

[Text] About three hours from now, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir will address the Likud Central Committee in the Congress Center in Tel Aviv. This morning he attended a routine event, the weekly cabinet session. Our correspondent Ze'ev Kohen updated us from the Prime Minister's Office:

[Begin recording] [Kohen] In the political arena, there is the feeling of a breather before the next round of talks begins on 7 January. In short, we can say that we are in an interim period.

Today, the cabinet heard Foreign Minister David Levi's report on the Washington talks. He also reported on the UN resolution canceling the equation of Zionism with racism and his discussions with the UN secretary general on Ron Arad and the other MIA's. The foreign minister briefed the cabinet on Turkey's intention of raising their representation here to ambassadorial level.

The prime minister expressed his satisfaction at the fact that the Israeli delegation in Washington looked after Israel's interests. Israel operated correctly, appeared dignified, and was well received in the world. The prime minister promised a thorough debate in the cabinet before the substantive talks start.

Emerging from the meeting, several ministers said that they understood the prime minister's remarks to mean that Israel will not object that the next round of talks is to be held in Washington. Minister Moshe Qatzav

expressed his hope that the third round of talks will be held in the region or at least near it.

Minister Zvulun Hammer said the same thing:

[Hammer] I do not know whether contacts are being held to change the venue. It was not discussed in the cabinet. Israel's request, however, was to hold the talks elsewhere, but I do not know whether the government will insist on this or not—in view of the fact that the United States did not intervene in the Washington talks as we initially feared.

[Kohen] In the session, Minister Yuval Ne'eman asked: What is the rush? Why are we already running to talks on 7 January? The United States is applying pressure here as if there were no other problems in the world, such as the 30,000 nuclear warheads in the USSR. Does the desire to bend Israel set everything else aside, he asked?

On another issue, I asked Minister Rehav'am Ze'evi whether the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] operation in south Lebanon was not a mistake, since the wrong people were brought to Israel.

[Ze'evi] I congratulated the IDF on a well-executed, professional operation. The timing was correct. It indicated that the Army has the initiative and the intelligence, and it was a signal to the Shiites and Hizballah that we are able to bring more captives. Obviously, what I read in the press this morning does not do justice to the IDF. The IDF did just what it meant to do, and did it well.

[Kohen] The cabinet also decided to appoint a seven-member ministerial committee to decide the future of IDF Radio, whether it will remain a part of the defense establishment or not. Moshe Arens chairs the committee; other members are: Ze'evi, Meridor, Moda'i, Pinhasi, Milo, and Hammer. [end recording]

More on Cabinet Session

TA2212191091 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1545 GMT 22 Dec 91

[Text] Israel will agree to hold the next round of talks in Washington. That was announced by the ministers at the end of the cabinet meeting today. The prime minister expressed satisfaction with the results of the Washington talks. The main point of debate with the Palestinians concerns the number of members on the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. Our political correspondent Natan Gutman reports.

[Begin recording] [Gutman] Cabinet Secretary Elyaqim Rubinstein delivered an extensive review of the bilateral peace talks in Washington. Rubinstein reported on the sessions of the committees for negotiations with Syria and Lebanon, based on what he had learned from Yosi Ben-Aharon and Yosef Hadas. As for the talks of the Lebanese committee, it was reported that Israel made it clear that in the framework of a comprehensive peace settlement it will agree to discuss security arrangements, as well as the implementation of UN Resolution 425. On the talks with the Syrians, it was reported that Syria counts on the United States and hopes that it will intervene on Syria's behalf at a later stage.

Naturally, the main briefing concerned the talks with the Jordanians and Palestinians. Elyaqim Rubinstein said that the main gap between the Israelis and Palestinians currently pertains to the number of participants on the joint committee. Israel demands that the number of Israeli delegates equal the total number of Jordanian and Palestinian delegates. The Palestinians, on the other hand, insist that there be one Palestinian and one Jordanian delegate for each Israeli delegate. Overall though, Rubinstein stated, it is impossible to say that the days in Washington were wasted.

Most of the ministers' questions concerned the date and venue of the future talks. The right-wing ministers protested the willingness to carry on the talks in Washington, while the rest of the ministers did not think that was so terrible. Let us hear Ministers Yuval Ne'eman and Zvulun Hammer on the subject.

[Ne'eman] The trip to Washington is another attempt to put our head into the noose that—accidentally—did not close on us, because the United States was busy with the question of whether the young Kennedy raped a Miami woman.

[Hammer] Israel requested that the talks be held elsewhere, but I do not think the government will insist on that now. Contrary to our earlier concern, the Americans did not intervene in the bilateral talks in Washington, and that was, after all, one of the reasons for our opposition to holding the talks there.

[Gutman] Ministers who participated in the debate got the impression that Prime Minister Shamir agrees that the next round of talks will take place in Washington. Shamir summed up the debate, saying that the two rounds of talks were reasonable from Israel's viewpoint. Our representatives did their best and maintained Israel's interests, the prime minister declared.

Also at the cabinet meeting today, Foreign Minister David Levi reported that the Turkish Government decided to upgrade relations with Israel to full ambassadorial level. At the same time, Turkey will institutionalize its ties with the PLO. The Turkish decision is viewed in Israel as an effort to enter the peace process in the Middle East, especially at the multilateral talks stage. Turkey may also come up now as a possible venue for the continuation of the bilateral talks. [end recording]

Work on Arrow To Be Suspended To Revise Plans

TA2312151091 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 23 Dec 91 p A1

[Report by Re'uven Pedatzur]

[Text] The Arrow project is expected to undergo a shake-up when Dov Raviv ends his job as director of MLM-Systems Engineering and Components, the Israel Aircraft Industries [IAI] plant developing the missile. In

addition to Raviv, the project's director will also be replaced soon. Work on the Arrow will be halted within the next few days until development plans are updated. The concept behind the project will be revised and a decision will be made as to how to continue it.

Circles familiar with the project said yesterday that some of the Arrow's objectives, which were set by Raviv, will probably be changed. The original plan had set far-reaching objectives, and the timetable of the development phases had been very tight. After the three failed trial launches, it became apparent that the Arrow's objectives could not be met within the planned timetable.

The attempt to demonstrate the Arrow's interception capability in the third trial launch was apparently premature. Sources familiar with the project contend that the timetable presented by IAI, and by Raviv in particular, was unrealistic. According to the original plans, the Arrow was to be operational as early as 1995.

Now, however, it seems that its development will not be completed before 1999. If it is completed by the end of the decade, it will not be the missile's final version but an inferior one, the sources note.

A change in the timetable would directly affect the Army's deployment of its defenses against ballistic missiles and the decisions expected to be made by the defense establishment in the next few years.

IAI sources denied that the replacement of Raviv was in response to the pressure of U.S. officials working on the SDI (the Arrow is part of that program) to replace senior executives in the Arrow project. According to those sources, Raviv was replaced for internal reasons. Nevertheless, it has been learned that the replacement of the project's director is the direct consequence of displeasure over what has been happening with the development plans.

The Arrow that failed the trial launches is not the missile that the U.S. customer wants now. Its specifications were altered after the Gulf war, and the new missile planned would be smaller, more mobile, and with an interception capability at higher altitudes. That version of the Arrow has not yet been developed, but the plan is to complete it during the current development phase.

This phase is scheduled to last three and a half years, and will cost $340 million. Seventy-two percent of that sum will be financed by the U.S. Administration through the SDI program, and the rest will be financed by the Defense Ministry.

UN Protests IDF Shelling of Irish Outpost

TA2312110491 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] UNIFIL [UN Interim Force in Lebanon] headquarters this morning delivered a sharp protest to the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] over an incident last night in which UNIFIL claimed that an IDF tank fired a shell at an outpost of Irish soldiers near the village of al-Tiri.

A UNIFIL spokesman told our correspondent Hayim Hecht that the shell hit the outpost's mess hall, completely destroying it. Fortunately, the soldiers were sleeping in their barracks at the time. An Irish officer claimed that there was no incident in the area that could justify such fire. This morning, the commander of the Irish battalion sent the details of the complaint to the Defense Ministry in Dublin.

In reaction, the IDF reported that the circumstances of the incident are still being investigated.

Prior Warning Said Received

TA2312170991 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] In response to a protest presented today by the UNIFIL commander to the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] over a shell fired by an Israeli tank at an Irish post in southern Lebanon last night, official IDF sources said that it occurred after terrorist movement was discerned in the region. UN troops received prior warning of the shelling. The Army sources said that the attack on the UN position was a mistake that would be investigated. Our correspondent Hayim Hecht points out that Irish brigade's canteen was completed destroyed and it is a miracle there were no casualties.

Knesset Rejects No-Confidence Motion

TA2312190691 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1800 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] The Knesset tonight rejected a no-confidence motion in the government, presented by Muhammad Mi'ari's Progressive List for Peace, over the situation in the territories. There were 44 votes against, 26 votes in favor, and four abstentions. Our correspondent reports that Knesset Member Mi'ari spoke against what he called the repressive policy in the territories, especially the ban on movement on the roads at night.

The defense minister said in his reply that the intifadah has somewhat declined, although the use of firearms has increased. He said that there are now bands of Arabs who are making a determined effort to harm Jews in order to sabotage the peace process.

Netanyahu Assesses Washington Talks

TA2112085791 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0805 GMT 21 Dec 91

[Telephone interview with Deputy Minister Binyamin Netanyahu by Dalya Ya'iri—live]

[Text] [Ya'iri] Good morning and a good Sabbath.

[Netanyahu] Shalom.

[Ya'iri] We heard a few minutes ago on the news that the United States will raise its own proposals regarding the venue for the next round of bilateral Israeli-Arab talks if

the parties cannot reach agreement on this by themselves. So are we to expect another week, or days, of discussions and deliberations on the venue?

[Netanyahu] We have no objection to the United States offering its help in this business, although naturally we would prefer to have direct contact with the Arab delegations. They, however, are apparently still at the stage of arguing even about direct negotiations. I believe we have made some progress in this regard in Washington, in driving it home to them that they must talk to us, although I cannot tell you that our education campaign has ended. So we will welcome the assistance in finding a solution to the venue issue, if necessary, but at a later stage they will have to talk to us.

[Ya'iri] We have heard that President Bush said late last week that he was disappointed that in fact no progress was made. You and your colleagues, however, came home optimistic.

[Netanyahu] I would say this: First of all, there was neither a failure nor a breakthrough. We are at the start of a process. Perhaps the disappointment is a reflection of the expectations. I think that the Arabs, first of all, were disappointed; we were not, because we had more realistic expectations.

This conflict is not symmetrical, and reactions to events are likewise asymmetrical. The Arabs, after all, have forced war upon us for nearly 50 years and continue to do so. Their goals do not necessarily give peace the top priority. They think that peace may be a necessary form of payment, due to U.S. pressure or other reasons, but their primary target is definitely not peace. Their goal may be territory or applying pressure on Israel. Peace is a kind of coin with which they may have to pay for their initial goals. Our thinking, of course, is completely the reverse. Since the outset of this conflict, we have wanted to live in peace with our neighbors and break down the walls of hostility they harbor toward us. That is why we saw a certain achievement in sitting—really for the first time since the establishment of the state—with three Arab delegations, neighbors with whom we had never sat down. This to us seemed an achievement. That is why I would say that if the Arabs were disappointed, it is part of their learning experience; if the Americans were disappointed, it is because they may not be as intimately familiar with the conflict as we are. We were less disappointed—and even expressed a certain measure of satisfaction—because we regard the deliberations themselves as a step in the process of building our relations with the Arab world.

[Ya'iri] Perhaps just as the Arabs have to soak up one aspect of the learning experience, namely that peace should be made with us rather than with the United States, we too should learn in parallel how to talk to local Palestinian representatives here or there?

[Netanyahu] We, of course, have no objection to this. The problem, as we have also seen in Washington, is that the Arab- Palestinian counterpart finds it hard to stick to the rules of the negotiations that were agreed upon in advance. This may be because of lack of political experience or no doubt being subjected to all sorts of pressure and suffering from many fears, but they will have to overcome these difficulties, because ultimately negotiations must be held in an acceptable framework. Otherwise, it is simply impossible to make progress.

[Ya'iri] Before the delegations left for Washington, some Israelis thought we were on the verge of a crisis with the United States. In any case, we were very much on a collision course. We noticed the almost hostile inflexibility that seems to repeat itself each time we are not in Washington. Moreover, now they are talking about the urgent need to stop settlement activity. Is there really a feeling that a crisis with the United States looms in the background?

[Netanyahu] I do not think so, and I did not think so beforehand. I must nonetheless say that it is not as though my expectations in this regard have been proved correct. The prime minister thought that we could withstand the various pressures applied by the international community. He also thought that we, too, have something to say to these or other U.S. assessments. He instructed us accordingly.

I think that the attitude that we are some sort of a passive object or that we must buckle under and subordinate our own desires or vital interests to others' wishes is incorrect. It is wrong first of all as a principle in the sense that we are a sovereign country, meaning that we have our own wishes and path. It is likewise erroneous in terms of our maneuverability in the international as well as U.S. arenas. We are capable of clarifying our positions, and we can definitely be persuasive and convince even elements inside the U.S. Administration, not only among the public at large.

[Ya'iri] When and where will the next stage take place?

[Netanyahu] The venue must still be discussed, but regarding the date, we have agreed on 7 January. Once again, I think one must have the next phase of the talks in mind, and view it as a process in which the Arabs gradually realize that they will ultimately have to live with us in peace—not only hold the talks with us rather than with the United States, but really live with us, which is to say that we will live here and not disappear from the area; that the security angle, which is such an integral component of these talks, will have to constitute a central part of these talks; and that it is impossible to talk about recognizing Israel's right to exist on the one hand while on the other negating all the minimal prerequisites necessary to honor this right. It is a lengthy process. We started it—or rather continued it—in Washington, having launched it in Madrid. One must exercise patience and see the full half of the cup while guarding our interests, which is what we will do.

[Ya'iri] Thank you very much, Deputy Minister Netanyahu.

[Netanyahu] Thank you.

Demands on Syria To Halt 'Terror' Detailed

TA2312110091 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 23 Dec 91 p A3

["Exclusive" report from Washington by Ori Nir]

[Text] The United States will consider striking Syria off the list of the countries supporting terrorism if it stops providing sanctuary and assistance to three major terror groups: the Ahmad Jibril organization; the Japanese Red Army, which is responsible for a series of terror attacks against U.S. targets, and the Workers Party of Kurdistan (PKK), a Marxist-Leninist organization that mainly operates against Turkish targets. This was recently reported by officials in the U.S. Administration.

Israel, at the same time, maintains that as long as Syria does not stop providing sanctuary and assistance to 13 terror organizations, its acts in this field "will sabotage the very essence of the peace process and the chances for its success." This is stated in a thorough document the Israeli negotiating team handed the Syrian team during the Washington talks.

The document was given as supplementary material to the review Yig'al Karmon, the prime minister's adviser on counterterrorism, made to his Syrian counterparts. Karmon's briefing caused serious resentment among the Syrian delegates, who claimed that the Israeli accusations and demands are irrelevant to the issue discussed in the framework of the peace process.

In the document, Israel demands that Syria stop using Lebanon as a base from which terror organizations under Syrian protection launch attacks against Israel.

The document also demands that Syria put an end to the attempts of those organizations to disrupt the Lebanese Government's efforts to impose its sovereignty throughout the country.

The third Israeli demand is that Syria break up the terrorist infrastructure under its auspices, which operates from Syrian soil and from Lebanese areas under Syrian rule. Syria is also requested to ban free movement of members of terrorist organization in those areas.

The section dealing with the infrastructure Syria has placed at the disposal of the terror organizations states that ever since the 1960's Syria has been providing a broad infrastructure of services to more than 1,200 "professional" terrorists and to many others serving as "reservists" for the terror organizations. They enjoy a variety of command, headquarters, training, and maintenance facilities, all operating under Syrian supervision and with Syrian aid.

Following are the main demands Israel has made to Syria to end the infrastructure services that it is providing to the terror organizations:

—The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (Ahmad Jibril's organization): closing the organization's headquarters in the al-Mazra'ah District of Damascus and closing the command center located in the al-Rayhan camp, some 12 km northeast of Damascus, near 'Ayn Sahib. The organization's secretary general's offices and center of communication are located in this camp as well. Closing the 17 September base, which is the organization's main training camp, located near the village of al-Duraynj, some 10 km north of Damascus; closing the base in the area of Hawsh al-F'arah, some 18 km northeast of Damascus, where the aerial arm of the organization is located (the al-Ruwwad [preceding word in Arabic meaning pioneers] Forces), which includes training facilities for airborne missions and storage areas for light planes the organization is using; and closing the organization's radio station, al-Quds Radio, which transmits instructions to intifadah activists in the territories.

—The Palestinian Popular Struggle Front (Samir Ghawshah's organization): Closing the organization's headquarters in the al-Yarmuk camp; closing its main offices in Damascus, including the "occupied territories" branch and the "central information center;" and closing its chief training camp in Zaydah, some 11 km east of the city of Dar'a.

—Al-Sa'iqah (Isam al-Qadi's organization): Closing its headquarters and main offices in Damascus.

—The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (George Habash's organization): Closing the organization's headquarters in Damascus and closing its main offices and training camp in Damascus.

—The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (Nayif Hawatimah's organization): Closing the organization's headquarters and main offices in Damascus; closing the Tal Manin camp, some 15 km north of Damascus; closing the Tal al-Ash'ari camp, some 15 km northwest of Dar'a; and closing the Ma'lula camp, some 40 km southeast of Damascus, which is one of the central training camps of the organization.

—Fatah al-Intifadah (the organization of Abu-Musa [Sa'id Musa Muragha]): Closing the organization's headquarters in Damascus; closing its three camps near Damascus; closing the organization's naval base near the beach town of al-Ladhiqiyah; and closing the main storage areas the organization has in Damascus.

—The Islamic Jihad, headed by Ahmad Muhana, and the faction headed by Fathi Shuqayqi and 'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Awdah: Closing the headquarters and main facilities of both organizations, located in Damascus, and closing the training camp of both organizations, located inside the training base of the Popular Struggle Front near Dar'a.

—The Palestine Liberation Front (the organization of Tal'at Ya'qub, headed by Abu-Nidal al-Ashkar): Closing the organization's headquarters in Damascus, which controls its operations in Lebanon.

In addition, Israel demands that Syria guarantee the return of the Israeli POW's and MIA's held by Palestinian and Muslim terror organizations.

'Rejectionist' Palestinians Hold News Conference

TA2212192891 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1700 GMT 22 Dec 91

[Report by correspondent in the territories Udi Segal]

[Text] The collective mood of Palestinians in the territories was best expressed by the absence of welcoming ceremonies as the Palestinian delegation returned this morning, the 14 delegates crossing the Allenby Bridge from Jordan on their way home to the territories. Arriving at the bridge after the Madrid conference, they were greeted by dozens of Palestinians waving olive branches, who organized a festive procession—the culmination of Palestinian euphoria. This time, after the corridor talks in Washington, the festivity was absent: There was neither a reception nor euphoria.

The Palestinians in the territories have come to comprehend reality. They understand that they should expect a long and arduous process before the conflict is resolved. The feeling that they are about to be granted autonomy has dissipated during the past weeks.

This morning, rejectionist organizations took advantage of the Palestinian disappointment. Riyad al-Maliki, who is identified with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, and 'Ali Abu-Hilal, a member of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, held a news conference in East Jerusalem. The message was: We told you so.

The two repeated the trite allegations that the delegation has deviated from the Palestine National Council resolution with regard to the terms of participation in negotiations. Again they noted the issue of East Jerusalem representation and the right to self-determination, which was withheld. They claimed that the delegates misinterpreted the Americans' intentions. The rejectionist organizations claimed that the Americans have not changed, and that the Palestinians would be unable to achieve the rights that, in their view, they deserve. Abu-Hilal and al-Maliki reiterated the assertion that this process is not leading to a solution.

Despite everything, the Palestinians have not lost all hope. Most of the residents of Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza support the delegation or, at least, the concept of a political process. In the next few weeks, the delegates will have to answer a few pointed questions and to explain that this is but the beginning of a process, and that patience and forbearance are called for.

'Alternative Ways' Seen in POW, MIA Talks

TA2412110891 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1020 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Telephone interview with Uri Lubrani, head of the Israeli team negotiating hostage affairs, by Rafi Reshef—live]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Reshef] We all want to hope, to remain optimistic. Do you believe Picco will be able to achieve results by the end of this week?
[Lubrani] I do not want to anticipate events, and the chances are not good, but we must continue hoping. I do not regard this week as the end of the matter. This is an ongoing process, and we—at least those I know, those who are involved in the matter—will not let up until the goal is achieved.

[Reshef] In your opinion, will Perez de Cuellar and his envoy continue their efforts even after 31 December?
[Lubrani] I think so, I believe they will not let up, because they have told us so. If they fail, we will seek other ways; there will be no letup.

[Reshef] What do you think of the remarks by the UN secretary general's spokesman, who said that the kidnapping of the three Lebanese by the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] last weekend has made their efforts to secure the release of hostages more cumbersome?
[Lubrani] These two issues have nothing to do with each other. I think the statement was made simply to explain why their task is difficult.

[Reshef] What you are saying is that they are preparing an alibi.
[Lubrani] Possibly. [passage omitted]

[Reshef] Do we know for sure, Uri Lubrani, who the other side is and what it wants?
[Lubrani] No. The answer is negative. We do not have clear-cut and precise information about the identity of the other side.

[Reshef] In that case, we do not know their demands.
[Lubrani] We do not.

[Reshef] Do we know with certainty that Ron Arad is alive?
[Lubrani] We all believe he is alive.

[Reshef] Is the belief based on facts?
[Lubrani] I will believe in facts when I see him alive with my own eyes. As long as it does not happen, I have to believe that he is alive.

[Reshef] Do we have alternative plans of action in the event the present initiative peters out?
[Lubrani] First of all, there is an ongoing activity outside the initiative, and it will continue. We will find alternative ways, although we cannot guarantee success. The one certain thing is that we will continue trying. [passage omitted]

Moda'i-Sharon Accord Settles Budget Dispute

TA2112200991 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 21 Dec 91

[Text] Finance Minister Moda'i and Construction and Housing Minister Sharon have signed an agreement settling the Construction and Housing Ministry's 1.5 billion shekel deviation from its annual budget. The agreement stipulates that in the next fiscal year, the Construction Ministry will reduce its building plan by 50 percent and build only 7,500 housing units, saving 1.15 billion shekels. The agreement further stipulates that the 250 million shekels earmarked for independent construction outside the Construction Ministry's plan will be struck from the ministry's 1992 budget.

Our economic affairs correspondent Menahem Friedman reports that the total number of housing units to be started next year will stand at 20,000.

Another Moda'i-Sharon agreement says that efforts will be invested in the field of mortgages in a bid to create greater demand for finished apartments and to free the ministry of its commitment to purchase unwanted apartments.

The finance minister has announced that the agreement with Minister Sharon does not mean a termination of the probe into the Construction and Housing Ministry's departure from its budget, which is being carried out in the wake of the complaint Moda'i submitted to the attorney general.

Kakh Demonstrates at U.S. Consulate

TA2212083191 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0700 GMT 22 Dec 91

[Text] This morning, some 10 members of the Kahana Lives movement, headed by Binyamin Kahana, stage a demonstration in front of the U.S. Consulate in West Jerusalem protesting the acquittal in New York of Sa'id Nusayr on charges of murdering Me'ir Kahana. This was reported by our correspondent Gil Litman.

Commenting on the ruling, the Kakh movement said that the acquittal of Kahana's murderer proves that U.S. justice is not to be trusted either in the legal system or in the U.S. ability to act as an honest broker between Israel and the Arabs. Kakh spokesman Barukh Marzel said that if justice is not done on this matter, Jews will rise and do justice.

Commentary Urges Gradual Weaning From U.S. Aid

TA2012154491 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 20 Dec p B1

[Commentary by 'Aqiva Eldar from Washington: "The Emperor's Torn Clothes"]

[Text] The words "loan guarantees" still cause Israeli diplomats and Jewish lobbyists in Washington to shudder violently. Foreign Minister David Levi described the immense challenge of aliyah absorption to President Bush, but was careful not to mention a word about the guarantees. Uri Savir, the consul general in New York, the largest Jewish city on earth, reported back to Jerusalem that when attending the Council of Jewish Federations in Baltimore he discovered "a Jewish community fearful of antisemitism (David Duke), of a President who is considered hostile and endangers their image of power, and of an Israel that could get into a confrontation with Bush." A senior representative of a major Jewish organization said the President will not have to get involved in another confrontation with Israel and its lobbyists at the expiration of the 120-day waiting period before the debate on the guarantees: During that period, from 4 September onward, any issue remotely connected to foreign aid has become the nightmare of every congressman. If Bush decides for whatever reason to make things difficult for Israel, all he has to do is sit back and let Congress decide for itself.

Any random visit to the White House briefing room will show that even if Yitzhaq Shamir were to impose a general curfew on all settlements and begin negotiations with a Palestinian delegation headed by Yasir 'Arafat, it could well be that Israel has already missed the train. Several minutes before Levi entered the adjacent room, and while historic peace talks between Israeli and Arab delegations were taking place across the street, I counted more than a dozen questions on economic issues and only one on the Middle East. Experts on U.S. politics say that foreign policy achievements cannot help President Bush very much among the social classes that are now paying the costs of his miserable performance on domestic and economic issues.

Against the background of that new reality, it is hard to find any subscribers to the opinions voiced by Yoram Etinger, a minister in charge of congressional affairs at the Israeli Embassy, about the need to concentrate efforts on convincing the American public that the guarantees should not be regarded as a foreign aid burden, but rather as "a contribution to the U.S. economy [no closing quotation marks as published]. In the United States, Israel is perceived as politically, militarily, and economically unstable. It is, therefore, also considered a high-risk debtor. To convince the American voter that this is really a financial deal and not another handout to an unemployed Israeli from Ashdod at the expense of a homeless person from Detroit, Israel must prove that it is a worthy business partner and not a welfare case pleading for U.S. aid.

Israel's well-wishers think that such proof would be furnished by the implementation of Finance Minister Yitzhaq Moda'i's proposal to give up U.S. nonmilitary aid gradually in return for the guarantees. After vehemently criticizing the timing and means (a press interview) that Moda'i chose to present his idea, experienced Israeli officials and level-headed Jewish lobbyists say that Moda'i assumed the role of the naive child who notes the emperor's nudity—or in the case of the U.S. emperor, his ragged clothing.

A right-wing government, which does not see eye to eye with the United States on the accord with the Arabs, should, by virtue of its own dictums, think of ways to wean itself from U.S. aid, which is the most effective stick the administration can wave, either overtly or covertly, every time it wants to pressure Israel toward political compromises.

It is true that the administration asks the Jews to help it maintain foreign aid every year [as published], but the erosion in both public and congressional support for this budgetary clause supports the judgment that things are changing. Getting the aid is becoming harder and harder every year.

Israel's choice is between waiting for the aid to be cut or taking preemptive action and informing the administration that we understand their difficulties and would like to propose a cut in nonmilitary aid. In return, we would ask for the loan guarantees to help us turn the aliyah into a lever for growth and economic reforms. In any event, people in Washington expect any endorsement in principle of the guarantees to be accompanied by a lengthy examination of Israel's ability to repay the loans. A dramatic gesture such as the gradual forfeiture of aid would demonstrate Israel's confidence in its economic future.

Washington sources assert that giving up the aid would lead Israel to adopt a more responsible and moral economic policy. Following U.S. recognition of the PRC, not only did Taiwan swiftly recover from the shock of having to do without U.S. aid, but that accelerated its transformation into an economic giant with huge export surpluses.

Here in Israel, finance ministers have become accustomed to letters from U.S. senators acting on the behalf of ultra-Orthodox lobbyists who oil their campaign wheels: The United States gives Israel $1.5 billion a year, so how can Israel ignore the senators' request to allocate $5 million to one of "their" yeshivas?

Since 1985, in every economic deliberation with the United States, Israel has promised that its economy is undergoing reforms that will lead it to economic independence, after which it will be able to renounce aid. Giving up on part of the aid now would dispel fears in Washington that the guarantees are nothing but camouflage for increased aid and continued spending.

Foreign Minister on Second Phase of Peace Talks

JN2012134691 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 20 Dec 91

[Text] The Arab and Israeli delegations are preparing to leave Washington after ending a phase of the Washington negotiations that has not achieved progress. The delegations, however, have agreed to hold the next phase of bilateral negotiations in Washington on 7 January.

Foreign Minister Dr. Kamil Abu-Jabir has said that the nature and developments of the Arab-Israeli conflict over the past years do not lead one to expect progress within days. Meanwhile, the spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation has stated that the Israelis can never impose their will on the Palestinians, who will continue their efforts to search for peace. More details in the following report:

Dr. Abu-Jabir said that it is unwise to view the ongoing peace efforts in isolation from developments being witnessed by the world, especially the collapse of the communist camp, the emergence of new centers of powers in the world, and the emergence of a new, unipolar world order.

While commenting on the overall developments of the second phase of the Arab-Israeli peace talks during an interview carried by the JORDANIAN NEWS AGENCY, the foreign minister said: It is necessary, when discussing the peace efforts now under way, to take into consideration the historical background to the Arab-Israeli conflict as an ideological, political, and cultural conflict that has lasted for more than 100 years.

In this context, Dr. Abu-Jabir referred to what this conflict has produced—wars, destruction, and tens of thousands of victims, as well as other catastrophes and events. He asserted that one cannot imagine the conflict to end and a just, comprehensive, and honorable solution to be attained within days.

The foreign minister added: In light of this clear understanding, we must expect the emergence of obstacles to peace from time to time. He said, however, that efforts must continue as a basic and indispensable foundation to reach the objective being sought. This is particularly true at this important stage of the life of the nation, which has entered a new historical juncture in the wake of the Gulf crisis.

Dr. Abu-Jabir recalled some of the historical aspects of the Arab-Israeli conflict, noting particularly that the Arabs for a long time have adopted the principle of confrontation with the opponent according to one, continuing pattern. This pattern, he said, has always provided a pretext for the other party to depict the issue to world public opinion as though it were a matter of Arab insistence on military confrontation, without there being any tendency toward peace and sitting together at the negotiations table.

The foreign minister added: Such an understanding, which has been used by Israel for a long time to its advantage, has left dimensions that we can now feel on the entire Arab arena. It has unfairly given Israel a chance to maneuver politically on the political arena while depriving us of this chance.

Dr. Abu-Jabir said that he believes the Arabs' collective adoption of peaceful activity to end the Arab-Israeli conflict and resolve the Palestine question peacefully, justly, comprehensively, and honorably can be considered, from the viewpoint of the world, a positive development that has shown the Arab nation to be a nation that seeks peace based on justice. Israel, on the other hand, has appeared, perhaps for the first time, as the only party that rejects peace as approved by international legitimacy, charters, and norms.

Additional Comments

JN2112083691 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 21 Dec 91 pp 1, 5

[Text] Amman (J.T.)—Foreign Minister Kamil Abu-Jabir Friday expressed confidence that the current deadlock in Arab-Israeli talks will be removed and the peace drive will regain momentum.

Speaking in an interview with the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Dr. Abu-Jabir affirmed that a Middle East settlement can only be achieved after "a total Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem."

"Although there seem to be temporary stumbling in the peace process, it is inevitable that it will head in the right direction and towards a just and comprehensive settlement in accordance with the principles of international legitimacy," Dr. Abu-Jabir said.

He said: "The Arab-Israeli conflict is an ideological, political and cultural struggle that is deeply rooted in us (Arabs and Israelis) and therefore, no human brain can imagine ending this dispute and reaching a peaceful and just settlement overnight."

Dr. Abu-Jabir's statement underscored Jordan's determination to pursue peace negotiations with Israel.

"It is unwise to look at the peace efforts in isolation of international development, notably the fall of the communist camp and the emergence of new world powers as well as a unipolarized new world order," Dr. Abu-Jabir told Petra.

Dr. Abu-Jabir said the Arab involvement in the stalled Middle East peace talks provided them with a historic chance to change the world's long-held image of them being peace opponents.

"In the past years of the Arab-Israeli conflict, Arabs always adopted the principle of constant confrontation with their rival (Israel)," he said.

"The other party (Israel) always used this argument to show to the world that the Arabs wanted a military

confrontation without seeking to sit down at the negotiating table and solve the issue through peaceful means," he added.

"But the Arab's adoption of peaceful moves is in the eyes of the world a positive development that showed they wanted peace based on justice, while Israel, for the first time, appeared to be the party that rejects peace based on international law."

The emergence of the Palestinian uprising came as a reflection of the feeling of the Palestinian people, contributing positively to moving humanitarian conscience into doing something serious to find a just and durable solution to the Palestinian cause to help the Palestinian people restore their legitimate soil and exercise their natural right to self-determination," he said. [quotation marks as published]

Dr. Abu-Jabir stressed the need for drawing the world attention that the occupied territories are Arab lands and represent a historical Arab right. He said that there was no room for any compromise on the land.

"The Arabs' understanding of this principle is based on their legitimate demand for their inalienable right in their land in return for ending the state of war and establishing a just and comprehensive peace," he said.

Chief Delegate Views Washington Talks

JN2212194791 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 22 Dec 91

[Text] The head and members of the Jordanian side to the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation returned to Amman this evening after participating in the bilateral negotiations in Washington. The delegation was welcomed by Dr. Khalid al-Karaki, adviser to his majesty the king; Foreign Minister Kamil Abu-Jabir; and other senior officials. Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali, head of the Jordanian side of the joint delegation, made the following statement to our correspondent for political affairs and other reporters:

[Begin recording] [Al-Majali] The first thing I would like to say is that it is incorrect to say that matters in Washington were procedural. A new development, in fact, is that a new term has been invented, namely, corridor diplomacy. One can recall the idea of ping-pong diplomacy and other diplomacies. This is a new matter. However, I assert that they were negotiations in the true sense of the word and dealt with issues of substance. As you know, we strengthened and highlighted the Palestinian identity in Madrid. We also buried the issue of the alternative homeland—that Jordan is Palestine. These are bricks that have been firmly laid. Regrettably, this time Israel tried to demolish what took place in Madrid. Therefore it was tough. However, neither the Jordanian nor the Palestinian delegations budged from the basic fact that Jordan is Jordan, not Palestine, and that Palestine is Palestine, where the Palestinian brothers are responsible for negotiating all their rights.

[Salim 'Ali Dhiyab, television correspondent for political affairs] We would like to ask about the intervention of the sponsor, the United States, in the absence of the Soviet Union.

[Al-Majali] Naturally, in the absence or the presence of what was formerly the Soviet Union, the primary sponsor is the United States, which did not visibly intervene in Madrid or in Washington. I believe that it was appropriate not to intervene in order to refute the Israeli officials' constant allegation that they can resolve problems if they sit with the Arabs without the presence of any other parties. I recall that during the discussions we reached a deadlock and could not find any way out of it. I proposed to the Israeli chief delegate that we refer to one of the two cosponsors. He categorically refused, saying that he did not recognize the existence of a sponsor at all. I said that the sponsor had invited us, hosted us, and we are in his buildings and are his guests. Still he said that he did not recognize that. We know that the United States and Israel are tied to a long-term strategy. Thus, it will be on its side most of the time. [end recording]

King Husayn Leaves for Private Visit to UK

JN2012123391 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 20 Dec 91

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn left Amman this morning for the United Kingdom on a private visit that will last for several days.

His majesty was seen off by His Royal Highness Prince Hasan, the regent, and his excellency the prime minister.

The Royal Highnesses Prince Hamzah and Prince Hashim are accompanying his majesty the king.

Government's 1992 State Budget Statement

JN1312193491 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 12 Dec 91 pp 12, 13

["Text" of the 1992 national budget statement delivered by Finance Minister Basil Jardanah at the House of Representatives in Amman on 11 December]

[Text] Mr. Speaker, Honorable Deputies: I am pleased to present to your esteemed House the draft law on the state budget for the fiscal year 1992. The principal feature in this draft law is the obvious increase in the government's current and capital spending. This spending is aimed primarily at expanding social and basic services for all citizens, improving the standard of living for those on fixed and low incomes, and contributing in efforts to deal with unemployment, pockets of poverty, water resources, and environmental problems.

Among the main features of this draft law is also the support it provides to the national effort to resume constant and healthy economic growth, increase self-reliance, and deal with the internal and external imbalances in the Jordanian economy, which took on new dimensions as a result of the events in the Gulf.

Mr. Speaker, honorable deputies, the document on the draft law for the state budget, which is presented to you today, reflects the financial policies which the government will adopt on the one hand, and the basic services it will provide to citizens and the related facilities it will develop, as well as the productive investment it will encourage, on the other. The document also shows the government's role in tackling the economic and social problems facing the national economy. It truly represents a number of decisions, programs, and procedures which greatly impact on the lives of citizens, not only during the period in which the budget will be applied, but also in the years to come.

Our limited and relatively few resources, compared with the enormous financial burdens of the current phase which are difficult to meet in full, have made the good use and fair distribution of resources in all sectors the principal pillar for the draft law on the 1992 state budget. Those reading this draft law will notice that despite the increase in public spending, which will consequently lead to an increasing government contribution to the life of citizens on all levels, the financial burdens on citizens does not increase in the same proportion.

Mr. Speaker, honorable deputies, you know that in 1989, the kingdom started to implement a comprehensive, medium-term program for economic readjustment for the years 1989-1993. That program has helped to restore monetary and financial stability, provide foreign currency to meet the citizens' needs, and rebuild the kingdom's foreign-currency reserves. The events in the Gulf, however, and the acute negative consequences it had on the national economy have led us to stop working with that program, imposed further burdens on the national economy as a result of the return of Jordanians working in neighboring countries, and deepened the internal and external imbalances in the national economy.

These negative developments have also resulted in a weakening of Jordan's credit rating in the world. Some international institutions and development funds in certain friendly countries have stopped providing loans and guarantees to Jordanian development projects.

Mr. Speaker, honorable deputies, in order to protect the national economy from facing a crisis similar to the one of late 1988, to free Jordan from the burden of its foreign debts for the time being, and to achieve further self-reliance in economic and financial terms and improve Jordan's international credit rating, a national medium-term program for a comprehensive economic revival and readjustment in 1992-1998 has been prepared. This program adopts an integrated economic framework that ensures the resumption of the healthy and constant growth, which provides further job opportunities, deals with internal and external imbalances, alleviates the burden of servicing our foreign debt, and leads to the restoration of confidence in the national economy, maintaining financial and monetary stability, and continuing to build the kingdom's foreign-currency reserves.

That program was discussed with the international institutions to secure foreign support from the world community to free Jordan from the burden of servicing its foreign debt for the time being, provide foreign financial resources to support the balance of payments, and build the kingdom's foreign-currency reserves following the cessation of Arab support and the drop in remittances made by Jordanians working abroad.

Following are the main features of the program:

1. Increasing the growth rate of the gross domestic product [GDP] to more than 3 percent in 1992, with constant gradual rises afterwards, to create more job opportunities.

2. Increasing the percentage of the total investment in the GDP gradually so that it rises from 21.1 percent in 1992 to 23.1 percent in 1998. The private sector will be encouraged to raise its investment from 11.8 percent in 1992 to 16.1 percent in 1998, with emphasis placed on projects that create more job opportunities, increase exports, and produce substitution commodities.

3. Reducing average annual inflation constantly so that by 1997, it drops to half its 1991 rate, despite the fact that the price index rose during the first 10 months of 1991 by 6.7 points, that is, 4.1 percent, while the monthly average of this index rose over the said period by 8.4 percent compared to the same period of 1990.

4. Reducing the budget deficit gradually from about 18 percent of the GDP in 1991, to 5 percent in 1997, by way of increasing the percentage of revenues in the GDP from 26.2 percent in 1992 to 30 percent in 1998, and decreasing expenditures from about 40 percent in 1992 to 35 percent in 1998, while still maintaining basic health, educational, social, and other services.

5. Reducing trade balance deficit from 27.7 percent of the GDP in 1992 to 11.7 percent in 1998. This will be achieved by gradually increasing national exports from 28.1 percent of the GDP in 1992 to 30.5 percent in 1998, with emphasis on agricultural exports and commodity exports of fabricated and mining materials, and also by decreasing imports from 55.7 percent of the GDP in 1992 to 43.3 percent in 1998.

6. Reducing the deficit of the balance of payment's current account, without considering official transfers, from 24 percent in 1991 to about 2 percent in 1997, and to zero percent in 1998.

7. Continuing the implementation of financial and monetary policies that increase Jordan's foreign currency reserves, enabling the country to meet its obligations and consolidating confidence in the value of the Jordanian dinar and its stability.

8. Controlling national credits in a manner that suits the program of economic readjustment and revival, and which prevents inflationary pressures. Government borrowing from the banking system should be highly restricted so that the private sector can have a better

chance of borrowing, and, consequently, play a more active role in the national economy.

9. Rectifying the financial and administrative status of public institutions, especially those involved in electricity, water, and transportation.

10. Improving the standard of living for low-income people and confronting and easing the problem of poverty.

Mr. Speaker, honorable deputies, initial economic indications for 1991 point to the fact that the Jordanian economy has made some success in absorbing the negative repercussions of the events in the Gulf; that the financial, external, and monetary sectors have begun to improve; and that most of the production sectors have started to move toward achieving growth. Following is an initial assessment of the economic situation for this year.

I. The Gross Domestic Product:

Initial estimates indicate that the GDP during 1991 will achieve real growth of about 1 percent. Over the third quarter of 1991, the industrial production index showed a marked growth of 29 percent compared to the first half of the same year, and of 2 percent compared to the same period in 1990. Initial indications also show that the industrial sector will in 1991 achieve positive growth compared to 1990, which proves that this sector has overcome the difficulties of the Gulf events. As for the achievements of other sectors of the national economy, some of them have retreated, especially the agricultural sector for several reasons including the bad weather, and the mining sector because of the decline in phosphate exports to Eastern European countries, as a result of the political changes in those countries. The other sectors will achieve moderate growth compared to 1990.

II. General Finance:

The government was able to dispose of the general finance for 1991 in a manner that improved revenues, controlled expenditures, reduced the budget deficit, and decreased disorders in the national economy as much as possible. This effectively contributed to maintaining the kingdom's foreign currency reserves and to reducing inflation.

If we exclude the emergency budget, which constituted part of the state budget and which was completely financed by foreign sources, we will find that the deficit in the 1991 budget, before the foreign grants and before the financing process, stood at 366.7 million dinars compared to 320.2 million dinars for 1990, while the deficit in the budget is estimated at only 267.8 million dinars, a 27 percent drop from what was estimated. This is considered a great achievement under the prevailing circumstances.

This improvement in financial performance resulted in the increase of local revenues at 13.3 percent more than estimated in the 1991 state budget law. These revenues were estimated at 702.5 million dinars in the state budget law, with the exclusion of the appendix. However, they were reestimated at 796.1 million dinars, 7 percent more than 1990. The financial grants exceeded the grants estimated in the 1991 budget by 236.2 million dinars compared with 167 million dinars for 1990, with an increase of 86.2 million dinars and at 57.5 percent of what is estimated in the budget law. This improvement is the result of intensified efforts on all levels to compensate Jordan for its losses as a result of the Gulf events.

Regarding current expenditures, they were estimated, including the expenditures estimated in the budget appendix of 1991, at 914.5 million dinars, while they have been reestimated at 909.8 million dinars, with an increase of 8 percent more than 1990 as a result of the additional burdens we have shouldered to absorb the effects of the Gulf crisis and the return of Jordanian workers from abroad.

III. The Balance of Payments:

Initial signs of Jordan's foreign trade indicate a tangible reduction in the deficit in the trade balance. This deficit is planned to reach $1.262 billion compared with a deficit of $1.668 billion in 1990. This improvement in the deficit in the trade balance is the result of a tangible reduction in Jordan's imports in 1991, which are estimated to reach $2.300 billion compared with $2.732 billion for 1990.

National exports are expected to drop from $1.064 billion in 1990 to $1.028 billion in 1991. This expected drop in exports is attributed to the retreat in Jordan's phosphate exports, and to closing neighboring markets in the face of national exports.

The surplus in the services balance during 1991 is expected to show a big retreat to reach $230 million compared with $493 million in 1990. This reflects a big retreat in the services sectors, particularly the tourism and transportation sectors, and the other trade services sectors, and the serious drop in the remittances of Jordanians working abroad as a result of the Gulf events.

However, regarding free remittances, the grants, although Arab aid to the treasury has stopped completely, these grants have maintained a satisfactory level as a result of the financial aid Jordan received from the international community, particularly from the European Community and the German Government.

In general, a big surplus is expected in the Jordanian balance of payments during 1991, despite the retreat in the actual surplus in the services sectors and the suspension of Arab financial aid. The expected surplus in the balance of payments during 1991 is attributed the financial aid extended to Jordan from the international community and the transference of part of the savings of the Jordanians who returned to Jordan from Kuwait.

IV. The Jordanian Dinar Exchange Rate and Foreign Currency Reserves:

The dinar has maintained its exchange rate against foreign currencies and preserved its stability during 1991 in spite of the obstacles and pressures which the Jordanian economy has faced. The dinar exchange rate against

the U.S. dollar has declined by 3.2 percent during the first 10 months of this year, at a time it realized an average increase by 3.9 percent against the main foreign currencies. What contributed to this stability was the ability of Jordan to rebuild its foreign currency reserves. The net hard currency reserves available with the Central Bank of Jordan [CBJ] at the end of last October reached $878 million, compared with $221 million at the end of 1990. If the foreign currency deposits of commercial banks available with the CBJ were added, these reserves would rise to $1.6 billion. It is noteworthy that these reserves do not include the gold reserves available with the CBJ and the debts owed to Jordan in accordance with payment agreements. It is noteworthy that this level of reserves is enough to cover the kingdom's imports for more than four months, which is a comfortable level according to international standards.

V. Inflation and Wages:

The general trend of prices has witnessed more stability during the first 10 months of 1991. The price index rose from 162.1 points at the end of 1990 to 168.8 points by the end of last October, with an increase of 4.1 percent. By comparing this rate with the increase rate in prices during the first 10 months of last year, 1990, which reached 6.3 percent, we conclude that we have realized an improvement in the general level of prices by 2.2 percent.

If the monthly average price index during the first 10 months of this year is compared with the corresponding figures of last year, the increase in prices would be 8.4 percent. The articles which stand as the price index for cost of living do not indicate any substantial increase.

The Department of General Statistics is currently making a survey of wages in all establishments that employ more than five workers. In the absence of results for this study, the analysis of national income accounts give some signals on the development of the share of workers in the GDP. Initial figures of these accounts indicate that the wages have reached 899 million dinars in 1988 and rose to 924.1 million dinars in 1989 with an increase by 4 percent, while in 1990 they reached 1.022 billion dinars, with a 9.4 percent increase.

Based on work force statistics as indicated by the annual report of the Ministry of Labor, the worker's average annual wage has reached 1,724.5 dinars in 1988, and increased to 1,784.3 dinars, with a 3.4 percent hike. It rose then to 1,949.5 dinars in 1990, a 9.3 percent increase.

VI. Unemployment:

The Jordanian economy is still suffering from the problem of unemployment which was aggravated as a result of the Gulf crisis and the adverse results that accompanied it, which deepened the problem.

The number of those who applied for employment with the Civil Service Commission and the Ministry of Labor, and failed to get a job during 1990 and the first 10 months of 1991, reached 49,000 and 63,000 respectively, an increase of 28 percent. Most of the increases in the applications have come from females, whose applications stand at 68 percent of the total number. One of the main pillars adopted by this draft state budget is to contribute to limiting the aggravation of the unemployment problem through a host of policies and programs that include:

A. Increasing capital expenditures to activate the national economy in order to provide more job opportunities.

B. Allocating enough funds to create 6,300 new jobs and to occupy the vacant jobs.

C. Supporting vocational training establishments to broaden their activities.

D. Activating the role of the Development and Employment Fund.

E. Providing necessary allocations to boost the government's efforts toward finding more job opportunities for Jordanians abroad.

F. Concentrating on government projects which need a large work force.

The expected increase in economic activity in 1992 will contribute to alleviating unemployment, as the GDP is expected to realize a real growth rate of more than 3 percent.

It will also strengthen the expected growth in private sector investments that will result from the programs adopted by the government to support investment through the allocation and marketing of new projects and providing development financing within the integrated economic framework specified by the economic revival and readjustment program. These programs also allocate a number of technical grants to open new markets and increase productivity to meet the demands of these markets, support the ready-made clothing industry, and provide further facilities through tariffs repayment and tax exemptions for spare parts used in export industries and by reviewing the law to encourage investment.

VII. Foreign Debts and Their Servicing:

The government has made great efforts to explain the financial burdens Jordan carries as a result of its foreign debts. It will continue seeking to alleviate these burdens through all means. As a result of the developments following the events in the Gulf, the government was unable to reschedule the loans it was given by foreign governments for 1991. The value of the due and unpaid loan installments at the end of the year are expected to stand at $400 million, taking into account the fact that installments of the loans owed to international institutions and part of other, selected loan installments were repaid because payment of foreign grants to Jordan and withdrawal from the softer loans were contingent on the repayment of the due loan installments.

The government will seek to reschedule around $1.5 billion in loans at the beginning of 1992 with easy terms,

including a 10-year grace period. That amount represents the installments and the interests that have not been paid by the end of 1991 and those due in 1992 and the first half of 1993. Efforts to reduce these installments or their interest will continue. The loans extended by international and regional institutions cannot usually be scheduled, and these were not included in the amount which we seek to reschedule.

Concerning Jordan's foreign debts, the committed standing balance that was unpaid by the end of 1990 stood at $8.236 billion, based on the foreign currencies' rate of exchange against the dollar at the end of 1989. This figure does not include the interest on these loans, including the interest we agreed to reschedule and which now stands at around $86 million.

Based on the same rate of exchange for foreign currencies as it was at the end of 1989, foreign debts as they stand on 31 October 1991 are estimated as follows: —Standing balance for the committed, unpaid loans: $7.964 billion. —Balance for the committed, but undisbursed loans: $1.089 billion. —Net balance for the withdrawn and unpaid loans: $6.875 billion. —The above figures do not include the interest on these loans, including the approximately $170 million due loans which we seek to reschedule. We can see that foreign debts at 31 October 1991 have dropped by approximately 3.5 percent of their value by the end of 1990. That drop is a positive development, especially if we take into account the fact that the greater part of the support given by the world community to Jordan following the events in the Gulf was made in soft loans, thus increasing the volume of foreign debts. The cancellation of certain negotiated commodity loans, some of which were partially implemented, has led to a drop in foreign debts.

Based on the foreign currencies' rate of exchange as it is on 31 October 1991, foreign debts are estimated as follow: —Standing balance for the committed, unpaid loans: $8.173 billion. —Balance for the committed, but undisbursed loans: $1.140 billion. —Net balance for the withdrawn and unpaid loans: $7.033 billion.

It is worth noting that if we take into account the improvement in the kingdom's net assets of foreign currencies, which increased by approximately $700 million from the assets at the end of 1990, the balance of foreign debts and the net foreign assets both show a major improvement in the foreign sector when compared to the situation in previous years.

After analyzing foreign debts, it becomes clear that there have been other positive achievements, whose effects will extend through many years to come. These achievements can be detailed as follows:

1. Loan installments due between 1992-2000 will be reduced from $6.351 billion to $5.595 billion, a 12 percent drop.

2. Interest during the same period is also expected to be reduced from $2.855 billion to $2.276 billion, a 20 percent drop, based on the prevailing interest rates on 31 October 1991.

3. Interest rates on the drawn loans have been reduced from 7.38 percent in 1990 to 6.61 percent in 1991. In the case of excluding the loans governed by the changing interest rates, then the percentage will drop from 6.73 percent in 1990 to 4.07 percent in 1991.

The effect of these positive achievements on the restructuring of foreign debts will help improve the investment climate and promote confidence in the national economy. The government will continue to adopt this course and to benefit from the best possible mean that would lead to reducing debts and alleviating their burdens, including the processes of buying debts with appropriate reduced prices, converting debts into new investment projects, or converting it to another debt that enjoys much easier terms to be paid through exporting national commodities or in local currency, provided that this currency must not be transferred outside the country.

VIII. Domestic Debts and Their Servicing:

Finance Ministry records show that domestic debts in the end of 1991, compared with the end of 1990, will be reduced by 67.6 million dinars as a result of the drop in borrowings from banks and the Social Security Corporation, and the surplus in the Central Bank's treasury accounts. The following table shows the development of these debts:

	In million dinars	
	1990	1991
Loans from banks and the Social Security Cooperation	109.2	89.5
The loans of the general domestic debts	446.5	446.5
The Central Bank's exceptional credit	390.0	390.0
The Central Bank's ordinary credit	173.5	175.6
The balances of other creditor accounts belonging to the treasury	0	50.0
Total	1,119,2	1,051,6

The government expanded its domestic borrowings in 1991, and the debts remained within the limits allowed by the law on public debts, the Central Bank law, and the state budget law for 1991. The government will continue to follow this course during 1992. It will also seek to diversify the domestic debts instruments by introducing treasury bonds valid for one year. Part of these bond orders will be sold at auction to reduce the cost of treasury debts.

The administration of domestic and foreign loans, which was adopted by the government, has achieved further

financial and monetary stability in the kingdom, and reduced economic imbalances as much as possible, and within the framework of securing the basic financial needs for the government and its various institutions, including the emergency expenditures imposed by external challenges to our beloved homeland.

Mr. Speaker, honorable deputies, as the current initial signs of the foundations of Jordan's economy show that Jordan has begun to overcome the repercussions of the crisis and its economy began to achieve an actual growth, the year 1992 is expected to witness the revival of national economy, provided that monetary and financial stability will continue to be maintained. The following are expectations of the basic activities in the national economy for 1992:

1. Increasing of the actual GDP by a percentage that might exceed 3 percent. The increase in the industrial and agricultural production and in the mining industry sector, particularly after the reopening of most of the neighboring markets before Jordanian products.

2. Achieving satisfactory improvement in the trade balance through the increase of exports, particularly if demand increased on Jordanian phosphates and if Jordan's agricultural products was sufficient to meet the needs of local consumption and the requirements of exportation.

3. An improvement in the balance of services as a consequence of an upturn in the tourism industry and the transport sector, with the possibility of a marginal increase in the remittances from Jordanians working abroad.

4. A stabilized dinar exchange rate and a continued buildup in the kingdom's reserves, subject to a rescheduling of foreign debts, as it has been pointed out.

5. Continued stability in prices and a projected drop in the record cost of living levels.

6. A shrinking in the budget deficit before foreign grants in absolute figures are computed and as a proportion of the GDP.

7. A continuing high joblessness rate in spite of the national economy showing a better ability to create additional job opportunities.

8. Foreign debts will rise, given the need to secure additional foreign resources to make up for Arab support and dwindling remittances from Jordanian expatriates. Much will depend on international organizations extending soft loans to Jordan.

Mr. Speaker, honorable deputies, the 1992 state budget bill marks the first year of the economic revival and readjustment program, which has secured the appropriate level of current and capital spending to meet the requirements of this economic stage. The following points are the budget bill's key features:

1. Continued support for our Armed Forces and various security services—the shield of the homeland, its impregnable fortress, and the mainstay of stability and development.

2. Allocating the funds needed to finance and to improve basic social services in the areas of health, education, and other such sectors. The 1992 overall current and capital allocations for the Ministry of Health have been increased by 23.2 million dinars, or 44.5 percent of the revised estimates for 1991. The overall allocations for the Ministry of Education have been increased by approximately 11.7 million dinars, or 11.3 percent. The allocations for the Ministry of Social Development have been increased by approximately 19 percent.

3. Raising the income of limited income groups, further improving the conditions of lower income groups, and reducing pockets of poverty through the following measures:

A. Increasing the allocations for the National Aid Fund. Eight million dinars have been set aside for 1992 explicitly for purposes of aid. Three million dinars of this year's budget have been allocated for the Development and Employment Fund to finance family rehabilitation projects.

B. Appropriating the funds needed to improve the conditions of workers in civil and military agencies and pensioners; 45 million dinars have been set for this purpose.

C. Allocating the funds needed to continue securing basic supply materials at subsidized prices and extending the support needed by military and civilian consumer corporations.

D. Continuing support for official civilian and military housing projects.

4. Contributing to an effective solution to the unemployment problem through the following measures:

A. Setting aside sufficient allocations to introduce some 6,300 new jobs, in addition to the jobs that will be introduced by the budgets of independent public corporations not listed in the general budget.

B. Reallocating funds to cover more than 2,000 vacant jobs that have not been filled this year.

C. Securing the high capital spending that should produce heightened economic activity and more job opportunities.

D. Increasing the amount allocated to the Vocational Training Corporation up to 3.4 million dinars to enable it to establish and equip new centers, to expand training programs, and to create new specialties so that it can absorb up to 16,000 trainees per year. It has already managed to raise this figure from 10,000 trainees in 1990 to 14,000 trainees in 1991.

E. Allocating the necessary amount of money to enhance government efforts to provide more job opportunities for Jordanians abroad.

F. Activating the Development and Employment Fund's role in providing more job opportunities by considerably increasing its financial revenues from foreign grants and the surplus of grain grants. Its role in financing family rehabilitation programs to limit the growing number of poverty pockets, as has been mentioned above, will also be activated.

G. Giving special priority to the intensive labor plans being carried out in governorates and other areas outside the capital by doubling the amounts allocated for agricultural and village roads, for maintaining roads, for substantially increasing school expansion appropriations, and for establishing health centers. Sufficient amounts have also been allocated to government buildings outside the Amman Governorate.

5. Financing programs to provide new water resources for household utilities, industry, and agriculture and to limit the water contamination occurring in the Jordan Valley from the pumping of well water to feed the water stored by dams, thereby mixing their waters. To achieve this goal, approximately 42.5 million dinars have been allocated to the Water Authority under the draft law you now have, in addition to 15 million dinars to the Jordan Valley Authority's projects.

6. Preparing self-generated financial revenues to cover the general expenditures. Domestic revenues are expected to amount to 833 million dinars, which will be sufficient for covering 88.5 percent of current expenditures. By adding the installments of the recovered loans of domestic revenues, 93.8 percent—which is acceptable during the early years of the economic revival and correction programs—will be covered.

7. Effectively contributing to the development march by increasing appropriations for capital development projects. Approximately 230 million dinars have been appropriated, excluding the repayment of loan installments. These appropriations constitute 12 percent of the gross national product. This high percentage will contribute to providing the basic facilities and the necessary infrastructure to promote and accelerate development.

Mr. Speaker, honorable deputies, an emergency budget was included in the 1991 state budget, in addition to the ordinary budget, as a result of the extraordinary circumstances experienced by the kingdom. This, together with the amount of money allocated in accordance with the appendix of the 1991 state budget law, will reach 186.5 million dinars. This amount includes 91.5 million dinars for current uses and 95 million dinars for capital uses. Approximately 120.2 million dinars, including 74.9 million dinars for current uses and 45.3 million dinars for capital uses, are expected to be spent in 1991.

An amount of 27.4 million dinars has been allocated, as shown in the 1992 state budget draft law, to complete the emergency budget projects, which are being implemented but have not yet been finished within the ordinary budget. This will control and evaluate the government's financial performance, especially since Jordan has achieved remarkable progress in overcoming the Gulf crisis and its repercussions.

A number of amendments have been introduced into various categories of the budget, especially into clauses on capital expenditure. These clauses are grouped in a manner eliminating repetition and discrepancy and allowing for a clear and detailed presentation of data. In order to provide each ministry or department with detailed information, a summary showing the total breakdown of expenditure for all programs and projects listed in the draft law has been prepared.

Mr. Speaker, honorable deputies, proceeding from these bases, the features of the draft law for the 1992 state budget have been defined. The following is a numerical summary of its most important articles:

1. Total revenues are estimated at 1.163 billion dinars, including 832 million dinars in domestic revenues.

2. Total expenditures are estimated at 1.2701 billion dinars, including 329.8 million dinars in capital expenditure.

3. Budget deficit before financing is estimated at 107.1 million dinars.

4. Financing budget is estimated at 278.1 million dinars, including 171 million dinars to repay domestic and foreign loans.

The details of these features are attached to my speech, which will be distributed to you.

Mr. Speaker, honorable deputies, I would like to thank all the sisterly and friendly countries and the international organizations which contributed to supporting this country's economy and which have enabled it to absorb the effects and repercussions of the Gulf events, including the return of thousands of our sons working abroad.

We are confident that the efforts and the cohesion of this country's sons, as well as the continued and fruitful cooperation between the government and the private sectors at all levels, will entrench the march toward progress, enable our national economy to regain its strength, and efficiently confront and overcome the challenges in a manner that will guarantee our citizens a dignified life.

Mr. Speaker, honorable deputies, as the government presents to your esteemed house the draft law for the 1992 state budget, after defining the pillars and features on which this draft law is based, it stresses that it looks forward to continued cooperation with your esteemed house to study and to approve this draft law. This will ensure that it is the best means of helping to confront the big challenges our dear country is facing and that it will contribute to our country's success under the leadership of the architect of the homeland and the guardian of its march—His Majesty King Husayn, may God preserve him.

May God's peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you.

[Signed] Basil Jardanah, minister of finance

The following is a table attached to the 1992 Budget Statement, summarizing the dimensions of the 1992 State Budget Law:

First: Revenues	Million Dinars
1. Current Revenues	
Domestic Revenues	832.0
Grants	275.0
Total Current Revenues	1107.0
2. Capital Revenues	
Recovered Loans	50.0
Technical Grants to Finance Development Programs	6.0
Total Capital Revenues	56.0
Total Revenues	1163.0
Second: Expenditures	
1. Current Expenditures	
Civil Expenditures	264.6
Military Expeditures	272.8
Other Expenditures (Subsidized Goods, Interest on Loans, Pension and Remuneration)	357.9
Pay Increases to Employees (Civil Servants, Military, and Retirees)	45.0
Total Current Expenditure	940.3
2. Capital Expenditures	
Expenditures of Development Projects Financed by Revenues	238.8
Expenditures of Development Projects Financed by Loans and Technical Grants	91.0
Total Capital Expenditures	329.8
Total Expenditures	1270.1
Third: Pre-Financing Budget Deficit	107.1
Fourth: Financing Budget	
1. Financing Sources:	
Loans to Finance Development Projects	85.0
Loans of International Institutions	46.1
Loans to Purchase Grains	27.0
Domestic Loans	20.0
Total Financing Sources	278.1
2. Uses:	
Cover Pre-financing Budget Deficit	107.1
Repay Foreign Loans	146.5
Repay Domestic Loans	24.5
Total Uses	278.1

Paper Views GCC Summit, Gulf War 'Victory'

JN2312113191 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic
23 Dec 91 p 1

[Editorial: "The Kuwait Summit and the Stance Toward the Arab Enemies!"]

[Text] The Gulf summit begins in Kuwait today where the leaders of the six states will meet under a $9 million tent. The fact which the Gulf brothers do not deny or try to conceal from their Arab "enemies" and friends is that this summit, like any other Gulf meeting, will not be discussing any Arab issue and is held behind an oil curtain, which is reminiscent of the iron curtain that the "communist comrades" had built around their camp. We now witness the results of their fear over what they have, and of their fear from others.

Despite Saudi Arabia's endeavors to tone down the extremism against the Arabs in the Gulf states, with the exception of the Sultanate of Oman, and despite the Sultanate's attempts to convince its Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] partners to depend on their own forces, Riyadh failed in the first case and Muscat failed in the second. What the other Gulf brothers are trying to impress on their citizens is that Arabism is a racist movement, after repealing with their consent, the concept that Zionism is a movement with such disgraceful description.

The Gulf states, which meet in Kuwait today for the first time since its occupation by the Iraqis who were ousted by the 30 states' forces, are surely trying to show that Iraq is the only one to suffer defeat in the crisis which had swept the nation and that the rest of the Gulf States emerged victorious, with their heads held high. In reality, the criterions of victory and defeat considered, the impossibility of Iraq's victory over the coalition which has besieged it, attacked it, and used the entire arsenal of the West against it, have not prevented the result from being a political, psychological, ethical, and economic defeat for all the Gulf States and a catastrophe for the homeland and the entire nation.

If the Kuwait summit takes place on the illusion of a victory over Iraq and the victory of our brothers in the Gulf over their "enemies", then the outcome of the summit will be no more than a new attempt to evade a disgraceful act, which started not in August 1990, but long before that when the Arab oil was put around the necks of those who own it and those who do not, and when this oil was pumped through Gulf veins to replace

Arab blood. Thus, the disaster took place and became the framework of every Arab, Islamic, and Gulf meeting. Homelands are not gold or pearl necklaces which can be bought and protected by money.

Saudis To Grant Visas to Palestinian Pilgrims

JN1812212591 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 18 Dec 91

[Text] The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs has announced that it received today the Saudi Government's agreement to allow 1,118 Palestinians from the territories occupied in 1948 to perform the 'umrah [minor pilgrimage].

A ministry source said that the consulate of fraternal Saudi Arabia in Amman has informed the pilgrimage director at the ministry today of the Saudi Consulate's readiness to grant these Palestinians special entry visas to the holy lands.

The source also explained that a date will be set for the travel of the pilgrims in the near future, in coordination with the competent authorities.

Iraqi Oppositionist on Plan To Topple Saddam

JN2312182891 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1650 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] Damascus, 23 Dec (SANA)—Ayatollah Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, head of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI], today announced a draft political plan to save all sectors of the Iraqi people from the repression of the Iraqi regime.

At a news conference in Damascus at noon today, which was attended by a crowd of journalists, media men, and correspondents from Arab and foreign television and radio networks, news agencies, and newspapers, Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim said that this draft plan will be discussed with all the Iraqi opposition parties and forces which have expressed interest in it.

Al-Hakim declared that this draft plan is based on a formula of effective coordination, integration, and cooperation with the Arab and Islamic forces, particularly the opposition forces in Iraq to save the Iraqi people from the destructive perils that endanger them.

Al-Hakim explained that this draft plan stems from several bases represented in the united stands of the Iraqi opposition, the formulation of a political alternative, and the reactivation of the popular uprising in Iraq to build an Iraq where all injustice is negated and where equality will be attained for all the sons of the Iraqi people

Al-Hakim explained that the proposed draft plan, which aims to topple Saddam and his regime and to save Iraq and maintain its unity and the future of its people, is based on foundations and principles within a general framework. He said the draft will soon be discussed with all the Iraqi opposition forces and parties.

Asked about his talks with President Hafiz al-Asad, he said that Syria enjoys special status in the region and the Arab and Islamic worlds. He praised Syria's constant support for the Iraqi people.

Responding to a question regarding his assessment of the role of the Iraqi opposition during last year and until now, he said that the opposition adopted a unified stand on the future and maintained its cohesiveness, despite the tragic circumstances that they have undergone. He said the opposition is continuing dialogue and meetings on all levels in light of the emerging requirements that must be addressed through a unified stand.

Responding to a question on the possibility of a coup in Iraq, he said: The Iraqi opposition forces will not be surprised if a coup against the Saddam regime takes place in view of the internal situation which is fit for such a development. He said this is one of the options the Iraqi opposition and the rising Iraqi people have for salvation from the existing regime, indicating that the Iraqi people are staging daily heroic operations against the regime.

Asked how he envisions the future of Iraq, he stressed the need to establish a free and independent Iraq, where stability and quiescence prevail, and which maintains relations of cooperation with the neighboring states.

At the beginning of the news conference, a press release issued by the SAIRI-Damascus Office was read out. The release states: At this critical period through which our beloved country is passing, a number of facts emerge on the horizon to paint the lines for the internal picture which the dictatorial regime has tried to conceal with all of its bloody methods. At the head of these facts comes the continuation of the revolution and jihad, which is an extension of the blessed Sha'ban [February-March] explosion. The signs of the internal condition on the ground earnestly show the dynamics of this continuity, whether those related to the dictatorial regime's state of maximum alert and its encirclement of Baghdad with a military ring, or those related to the oppressive measures against, and the displacement of the population in certain southern villages; measures that are trying, in despair, to control the security conditions, but to no avail. On every occasion, the masses' reaction to these measures increases the tyrant regime's frustration over security and its internal worries, including those about a military coup, which the regime fears will happen.

The statement adds: At this critical period, and at a time when the Iraqi opposition has covered an important distance on the path of ensuring denunciations from the international organizations against the regime's barbarism, SAIRI Chairman Ayatollah Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim has prepared a plan which he will discuss with regional powers, particularly those neighboring Iraq, as well as the Iraqi opposition. It is an integrated plan of politics and jihad that has room for all forces with influence in the arena of Iraqi action to dispose of dictatorship, foreign hegemony, and the possibilities of division. The plan also adopts the formula for effective coordination and cooperation with the Arab and Islamic states neighboring Iraq to rescue it from international isolation and the grave consequences surrounding it, free from any foreign intervention. The plan is based on a number of bases, represented by the unity of the nation and the opposition, developing a political alternative, the endeavor to activate the action of the Iraqi Army, and dealing with the international dimension of the Iraqi cause on the basis of equilibrium and independent decisionmaking. Ayatollah al-Sayyid al-Hakim's visit to Syria marks the beginning of the effort required by this plan, which seeks to build a future Iraq without injustices and to ensure equality for all Iraqi citizens.

Khaddam Receives SAIRI Leader

JN2312213391 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2115 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] At 2015 today, Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received the delegation of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI], led by Ayatollah Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, head of the assembly. Talks

centered on the overall situation in the region, particularly on developments in the Iraqi arena.

Press Urges Firm Position in Washington Talks

JN2412080891 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0445 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Press review]

[Text] The newspaper AL-BA'TH editorially comments on the first round of the Washington talks on the Arab-Israeli conflict, and explains the intransigent Israeli stand taken during the negotiations. AL-BA'TH touches on the statements made by Shamir on 22 December, which are indicative of stepped-up Israeli intransigence.

Under the headline "The Required Arab Position," AL-BA'TH says: The Arab delegations have said that the Israelis insisted throughout the negotiations on discussing procedural issues that have nothing to do with the essence of the conflict with a view to diluting the negotiations, and consequently torpedoing the peace process. Thus, the first round of the Washington negotiations ended without making any progress toward the attainment of a just and comprehensive peace. These results prompted U.S. President George Bush to express his frustration and disappointment.

AL-BA'TH adds: Now that the Arabs are getting ready for the second round of the negotiations due to be held next month, the overall Arab position should acquire further cohesion and firmness with regard to the fundamentals of the conflict, especially since the Arabs have scored some successes that have to be built on at both the Madrid conference and during the Washington talks. They have proved to the entire world that they truly desire to establish a just and comprehensive peace, whereas Israel's aggressive and expansionist nature has been exposed.

AL-BA'TH notes the attempts currently under way to create a loophole in the overall Arab position, and urges the Arabs to be aware of Israel's designs. In its editorial, AL-BA'TH highlights Shamir's statements in which he said that the mission of Israeli negotiators is to achieve peace without giving up any territory.

Concluding its editorial, AL-BA'TH says: Yes, this is the same old Israeli position, which has remained unchanged throughout the peace process. Consequently, the Arabs are required to reinforce their position, which rejects any relinquishment of their rights. Indeed, they are required to develop this stand.

The newspaper TISHRIN comments editorially on Shamir's hardline statements which reiterated the Israeli antipeace position. Under the headline "Shamir Rejects Peace," the newspaper TISHRIN says: Enemy Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir has made it clear to every person who pins hopes on a possible change of heart by Israel that there will never be a relinquishment of the occupied Arab territories. As a matter of fact, he made a statement which can be summed up as follows: Give us the land, and take peace. Hence, it was not strange that the Israeli negotiators devoted all their efforts in the Washington talks to obstructing the peace process and evading any discussion of the fundamentals of the Arab-Israeli conflict, foremost among which are the Palestinian people's rights, and withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories.

TISHRIN adds: It is worth noting that Shamir's statements, which were supported by similar statements made by Sharon on continued settlement in the occupied Arab territories and the building of thousands of houses for Soviet Jews there, have come on the heels of the immense efforts made by the United States to repeal the UN resolution which equates Zionism with racism.

Concluding its editorial, TISHRIN says: Israel's preparations for aggression, occupation, and expansion are without limits. It is high time for the world community to vindicate its legitimacy, principles, and resolutions, and to remove the escalating aggression in the Middle East, which has been going on for more than 40 years.

Afghanistan

Russian Vice President Continues Visit

Confers With Khaleqyar

LD2312213891 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Excerpts] The prime minister's press office reports that Fazl Haq Khaleqyar, prime minister of the Republic of Afghanistan, met this afternoon with Aleksandr Rutskoy, vice president of the Russian Republic, in the prime minister's office. During the meeting, which was attended by Afghan ambassador to Moscow Daud Razmyar and Boris Nikolayevich Pastukhov, talks were held on the results of Rutskoy's visits to Iran and Pakistan and on efforts for a political solution to the Afghan problem under the UN secretary general's five-point plan. Special attention was paid to the further development of friendly relations between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Russian Republic and cooperation in economic, trade, cultural, scientific, and technical fields.

Vice President Rutskoy noted efforts by the republic to end the war and restore peace in Afghanistan, and reported the outcome of his recent visits and negotiations by the high-ranking Russian delegation with authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Rutskoy also expressed some common points of view of the Russian Republic, Iran, and Pakistan about the political solution of the Afghan problem with participation in the process of all Afghan sides under the UN secretary general's five-point plan. Calling the cessation of war and the restoration of peace in Afghanistan necessary for the further development of economic relations among the countries of the region, Rutskoy reassured the head of the Afghan Government that despite problems caused by the change to a market economy, the Russian Republic would make every effort in that direction. [passage omitted]

Speaking of the results of the visit by Vice President Rutskoy, Prime Minister Khaleqyar said: The people and political and social circles of the Republic of Afghanistan follow with interest and hope your visits to the countries of the region and the efforts of the Russian Republic to help the political solution of the Afghan problem. The people of Afghanistan, mujahed and nonmujahed and Afghans inside and outside the country, now think about peace more than at any time, and wish to attain lasting peace that can guarantee the security, calm, and safety of all Afghans, and believe that this problem can be resolved in a desirable way through understanding between Afghans themselves under the UN secretary general's five-point plan.

Khaleqyar, mentioning the financial and economic restrictions and problems caused by the 13-year war, felt that working to alleviate the suffering was part of the Afghan Government's national, moral, and humanitarian duties.

Speaking on the importance of the Russian delegation's visit to Afghanistan, the prime minister said: I hope that as a result of bilateral efforts and in light of current changes and in the continuation of the previous talks of the high-ranking delegation of the Republic of Afghanistan with your excellency, good grounds are prepared for economic, scientific, and technical cooperation and that friendly relations further develop between the people of the two countries.

In another section of his remarks, Khaleqyar referred to the existence of suitable opportunities for mutually beneficial cooperation between Afghanistan and the Russian Republic in manufacturing, industry, agriculture, the training of cadres, and other matters, and shed light on providing facilities for the ecouragement of internal and foreign investment in the private sector. Khaleqyar added: There are ample possibilities and opportunities for mutual trade and economic cooperation in our country's private sector. Right now joint investments have been set up with the Russian Republic and other independent republics in the fields of commodity barter, transportation, and manufacturing, and further attention can be paid to the growth and developement of those activities.

Khaleqyar insisted on the need to implement the commitments of the Russian Republic with regard to agreements for the current year and the continuation of economic, technical, and trade cooperation during 1992, and requested that delegations of the two sides at the trade minister level should assess issues of interest sooner rather than later and should make decisions for the continuation of cooperation.

In conclusion, Vice President Rutskoy reassured Khaleqyar that the nature of the present situation for the development of economic and trade relations through enterpreneurial circles had been taken under consideration and assessment, and with current changes more opportunities for the development and deepening of bilateral relations would come about in a better manner. [passage omitted]

Joint Statement Issued

LD2312191191 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Joint statement of the Republic of Afghanistan and the RSFSR issued on 23 December]

[Text] A high-level delegation of the Russian Federation, headed by Vice President A.V. Rutskoy, paid a working visit to the Republic of Afghanistan from 22 to 23 December 1991. The visit of the high-ranking Russian Federation delegation in the new conditions after the establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States is specially valuable in connection with the expansion and consolidation of new forms of mutual and beneficial links between the two countries on the basis of new realities created as a result of the (?latest) developments.

During his stay in the Republic of Afghanistan, Aleksandr Rutskoy met with Afghan President Najibollah and Prime Minister Fazl Haq Khaleqyar. During the meetings, which were held in an atmosphere of friendship, the two parties held detailed discussions on the recent developments in the Republic of Afghanistan, the Russian Federation, and the Commonwealth of Independent States, as well the situation in the region and the world. They held comprehensive talks about issues relating to the current process for a political solution of the situation in the Republic of Afghanistan; the participation of the Russian Federation in the foreign dimensions of the question; ways and methods of continuing, expanding, and consolidating mutually beneficial links; questions related to cooperation in political, economic, trade, technical, and cultural areas between the two countries; and joint efforts on the part of both parties toward safeguarding peace and stability in the region and the world. After putting forward their views on these topics, the two parties reached the following understanding:

The Russian Federation delegation, after presenting a comprehensive report on the results of its recent visits and its consultations and discussions with the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and Afghan opposition groups residing in Iran and Pakistan, expressed pleasure at the consistent pursuit of the policy of national reconciliation in the Republic of Afghanistan, which is gaining daily increasing support on the national and international levels. The delegation asserted that the national reconciliation policy has provided suitable grounds for arriving at a political solution of the situation in the Republic of Afghanistan.

The Russian Federation delegation, expressing support for a political solution of the situation in the Republic of Afghanistan through intra-Afghan dialogue and understanding, praised the five- point statement by the UN secretary General as a means of succeeding in this noble goal, and said it would not spare any effort or assistance toward its realization.

The Russian Federation delegation expressed appreciation for the support of the Republic of Afghanistan for the joint U.S.-Soviet statement, dated 13 September 1991, in which emphasis was laid on the cessation of the supply and delivery of weapons from all sources to all Afghan parties in the conflict. Based on the concern of the Afghan side in this regard, the delegation said it would spare no cooperation and efforts necessary to persuade other involved countries to support this statement and follow this example.

The Russian Federation delegation expressed its pleasure and satisfaction at the sincere and humanitarian efforts of the Republic of Afghanistan to bring about the liberation of prisoners of war, as a result of which 10 prisoners have been released so far. It warmly welcomed the continuation of Afghan efforts regarding the release of prisoners of war.

The Republic of Afghanistan, expressing respect for the right of nations to self-determination and the will of the Russian people to exercise self-determination, described the creation and expansion of independent and mutually advantageous relations between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Russian Federation, based on historical and traditional ties, as effective and fruitful. The Russian Federation delegation praised Afghanistan's stance in this regard.

The Republic of Afghanistan welcomed the outlook and method of approach of the Russian Federation concerning a political solution of the situation in the Republic of Afghanistan, in particular Afghanistan's support for dialogue, negotiations, and understanding among Afghans as a key to the solution. It also welcomed the Russian Federation's support for the articles of the Geneva Accords and the UN secretary general's five-point statement, and its readiness to help toward a political settlement of the situation in the Republic of Afghanistan.

Regarding the recent visits of the Russian Federation delegation to the Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan, the Republic of Afghanistan warmly welcomed the common positions of these countries. They described the emphasis of these countries on a speedy political solution of the question of Afghanistan on the basis of UN resolutions, the UN secretary general's five-point statement, and combined efforts by Russia, Iran, and Pakistan, and the stress placed by Iran on the establishment of a cease-fire by all belligerents, as important steps toward the establishment of peace and stability in the Republic of Afghanistan.

The Republic of Afghanistan, in continuation of its friendly and humanitarian responsibility regarding prisoners of war, stated on this occasion that it would unilaterally release a number of prisoners belonging to the opposition groups as a goodwill gesture to help this humanitarian cause.

To expand, broaden, and consolidate relations further in the economic, commercial, educational, technical, and cultural fields, both parties agreed that new joint Afghan-Russian commissions should be created and that there should be exchange visits by delegations in various fields.

Both parties agreed, observing their pledges, to study new areas for mutually beneficial exchanges within the framework of previous agreements. The Russian Federation stated that, despite the economic problems resulting from the transition to a free market system in that country, it will not spare any possible economic, scientific, and technical assistance to the Republic of Afghanistan in 1992.

Both parties, at the end of their talks and exchanges of opinion, stressed the utilization of all existing possibilities in order to continue their joint efforts for a political solution of the question of Afghanistan, serve the cause of peace and stability in the region and the world, and further the development of mutually beneficial friendly relations and cooperation. They highly assessed the working visit by the high-ranking Russian Federation

delegation headed by A.V. Rutskoy at this particular juncture of time as having achieved understanding and common ground regarding the above matters.

Rutskoy Switches Embassy Flags; Departs

LD2412062491 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0439 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] Kabul, Dec. 23, BAKHTAR—Aleksander Rutskoy, Russian Federative vice President who en route of his visit from Iran and Pakistan has arrived in Kaoul yesterday for meeting with the Afghan leadership left for home today.

Rutskoy, BAKHTAR reports, prior to his departure, has hoisted the Russian flag over the building of the embassy of the former Soviet Union in Kabul.

During the hoisting ceremony, Mr. Rutskoy talked on the developments shaping in his country.

At the Kabul international airport, the Russian vice-president was seen off by Abdul Rahim Hatif, the Afghan vice president, M. Aslam Watanjar, defence minister and, some high-ranking officials.

Bangladesh

Burma Said To Ignore Offer To Defuse Tension

BK2412052591 Hong Kong AFP in English 0509 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] Dhaka, Dec 24 (AFP)—Burma has ignored a Bangladesh offer of talks to defuse border tension following an incursion by Rangoon troops, press reports said here Tuesday.

The paramilitary border force, the Bangladesh Rifles, had proposed talks with Burmese border guards after the weekend incident which left at least one Bangladesh soldier dead, the reports said. Other reports said the Burmese were deploying more troops at the border.

Burmese troops launched a surprise attack on a border outpost at Naikonchari near the southeastern town of Cox's Bazaar on Saturday. A Bangladesh guard died and 10 others were injured in the first ever confrontation between Burmese and Bangladesh troops.

Foreign Minister Mustafizur Rahman, who paid an official visit to Rangoon last month, has said that "We have told Myanmar (Burma) to take urgent steps to defuse tension along the border and undertake immediate negotiations to restore peace and tranquility along the border."

The Burmese ambassador in Dhaka was summoned to the Foreign Ministry Sunday and was told by Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Reaz Rahman of the "government's serious concern" regarding the incident.

Newspapers said Tuesday that tension was running high in the border areas, where further Burmese troops deployment were reported and many panic-stricken villagers had left the area.

India

Statement on Commonwealth of Independent States

BK2312164291 Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English 1534 GMT 23 Dec 91

["Statement by the External Affairs Ministry on 23d December 1991 on the Formation of a Commonwealth of Independent States"—ISI headline]

[Text] The Government of India has been observing the momentous developments and significant changes which have been occurring in the Soviet Union. The agreement between 3 republics of the Soviet Union signed to form a Commonwealth of Independent States at Minsk and the arrangements finalised by presidents of the 8 more republics of the erstwhile Soviet Union at Alma-Ata on 21st of Dec are of vital importance to the government and the people of India. India's relations with the peoples of the various republics of the Soviet Union have been not only longstanding and historical, but have always been substantive in cultural, economic and political terms. In this context, the Government of India's response to the creation of a new commonwealth is positive. India hopes to nurture, diversify, and expand relations with all the republics in the tradition of the close and friendly relations that have always existed between India and the peoples of these republics. In this context, the Government of India has initiated action over the last few weeks to come to new political arrangements with the governments of the various republics. Direct political and diplomatic contacts have been established with the presidents of Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Kyrghyzstan, Turkmenia, Uzbekistan, Belarus, and Tajikistan. The Government of India is in the process of negotiating arrangements for cooperation in the political, economic, commercial and cultural spheres with the governments of these republics. The Government of India will also undertake direct interaction with the other republics in the coming days.

Solanki on Recognition

BK2312164491 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] India has decided in principle to recognize the 11 Soviet republics which have formed the Commonwealth of Independent States. This was disclosed by the external affairs minister, Mr. Madhavsinh Solanki, at a news conference in New Delhi this evening. He said formal relations with these republics will be established after assessing the outcome of the meeting of the commonwealth to be held next Monday.

Welcoming the formation of the commonwealth as a positive development, Mr. Solanki said that direct diplomatic and political contacts have been established with the presidents of eight republics. These are Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, Turkmenia, Uzbekistan, Belarus, and Tajikistan.

About the foreign debt issue, Mr. Solanki said that the Alma-Ata declaration calls for fulfillment of all agreements with the foreign countries.

In reply to a question about the Indo-Soviet treaty of peace, friendship and cooperation, the minister said it is an open issue and will be discussed with the individual republics.

Asked about the reported statement of the Russian vice president, Mr. Aleksandr Rutskoy, that the Kashmir issue be resolved in accordance with the international agreement, Mr. Solanki said that an understanding on the matter has been reached between him and the Russian president, Mr. Boris Yeltsin, during their talks in Moscow last month.

Rao Comments on Outcome of SAARC Summit

BK2212103091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 22 Dec 91

[Text] The prime minister has said the role of SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] will have to be intensified to face the challenges posed by global changes. He was speaking to newsmen accompanying him while returning from Colombo today after attending the SAARC summit.

Mr. Narasimha Rao welcomed the idea of a linkage between the SAARC and international organizations which has been included in the Colombo Declaration. He said the formation of new regional groupings among the developed countries may be discriminatory against the developing countries. Mr. Narasimha Rao was happy at the SAARC decision to establish a South Asia commission on poverty alleviation. He described this as a meaningful exercise.

The prime minister also referred to the setting up of a committee for economic cooperation for a regional study on trade, manufacture, and services. He also referred to the declaration on the commitment to liberalize trade in the region so that all countries in the region share the benefits of trade expansion. The prime minister pointed out that for the first time a provision for cooperation in the fields of education and child survival, protection, and development has been included in the SAARC declaration.

Iran

Habibi on Relations With Former Soviet Republics

LD2312194891 Tehran IRNA in English 1602 GMT 23 Dec 91

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 23, IRNA—The first vice-president said here Monday that Iran is to set up representative missions in the five Central Asian Muslim republics, while its consulate in Baku (Azerbaijan Republic) is to be turned into an embassy.

The Iranian Embassy in Moscow will continue to function as the country's embassy in the Federation of Russia, Hasan Habibi said at his weekly press conference. "The Islamic Republic and the Russian Federation will have normal (diplomatic) relations and all agreements (between Iran and the erstwhile Soviet Union) are valid," he said.

Habibi also a government spokesman said that each of Iran's northern neighbours, somehow or other have had relations with Iran. "Apart from religious ties they share with Iran, there exists a common cultural background."

Iran has decided to recognize the Russian Federation and the other republics of the former Soviet Union, especially the five Central Asian Muslims of Kazakhistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan, as well as Muslim Azerbaijan which lies in the Caucasus region on the western side of the Caspian Sea.

Protest Lodged Against 'Unmanly Act' in Baghdad

LD2412093991 Tehran IRNA in English 0845 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 24, IRNA—Iraqi charge d'affaires to Tehran Fakhri Hamoudi al-Dalini was summoned to the Foreign Ministry Tuesday and was informed of the Islamic Republic's severe protest and concern over a terrorist attack on two Iranian diplomats in Baghdad on Monday.

Foreign Ministry Director General for the Persian Gulf Affairs Hojjat ol-Eslam Mostafa Haeri Fumani urged the Iraqi regime to immediately hand over the culprits of the terrorist act who, he said, enjoyed the support of the Iraqi regime in committing the "unmanly act."

The Iraqi diplomat expressed deep regret over the incident and assured Fumani Haeri that he will spare no efforts in handing over the culprits to Iran.

Monday morning, an armed group, members of the outlawed Monafeqin Khalq Organization (MKO) in Baghdad, attacked two Iranian Embassy staff members. Javad Pak-Aein is reportedly in grave condition because of gun shots. Another diplomat was severely beaten and seriously injured. He is now under medical care.

Kuwait PGCC 12th Summit Session Discussed

LD2412112591 Tehran IRNA in English 1030 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 24, IRNA—Three leading morning dailies on Tuesday editorialized on the ongoing 12th summit session of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (PGCC) inaugurated in Kuwait with participation of six Arab littoral states in Kuwait last night.

JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI said that the session can create a spirit of mutual understanding between Iran and the council by apologizing for its past attitude towards Iran, while KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL urged participation of all the regional countries in any security system for the Persian Gulf and SALAM stressed that the session has a security-military nature aimed at revitalizing of the 'peninsula shield'.

JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI termed PGCC support for the aggressive Iraqi regime during the 1980-88 war as a major mistake of the council.

"Though certain PGCC states have regretted their past deeds, none have so far extended an apology to the Iranian nation and government," the daily noted.

The ongoing PGCC session can provide favourable grounds for establishing a spirit of mutual understanding between the council and the Islamic Republic through apologizing for its generous support for the aggressor.

The council has so far been a failure and needs to revise its political structure. Such a change, if made properly, can lead to a permanent peace and security in the region. However, it may experience a fresh failure if it continues to repeat the same mistakes.

Inviting the U.S. and other arrogant powers to the regional security arrangement would be a dangerous move.

The editorial stressed that the regional security must be provided by the littoral states in the region, a fundamental factor which must be acknowledged by all the regional and alien countries.

Washington wastes no time to overthrow any Persian Gulf leader once it finds a more subservient stooge, concluded the daily.

The English daily KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL wrote that without Iran and Iraq, the establishment of a permanent and effective security system is impossible but added that as long as Saddam Husayn is in power, none of the PGCC countries will agree to sign any security pact with Iraq.

"With respect to Iran's participation in regional security, a big problem exists and that is the presence of foreign forces in the PGCC countries."

Some PGCC countries have already signed joint military pacts with the U.S., France and Britain. "It is unlikely that Tehran would join any configuration which includes alien powers."

"The only effective security system for the Persian Gulf will be created with the participation of all the regional countries free of any foreign hands."

SALAM, referrring to military-security nature of the session, said it aims to bring back the Peninsula Shield. Revival of the Peninsula Shield is apparently in contradiction with the pacts that the PGCC members have separately signed with the U.S., Britain and France.

Despite the massive stockpile of arms and ammunition, the PGCC members could not defend themselves against the Iraqi aggression and the "Peninsula Shield was a broken shield."

Lack of coordination and incompetency of the commanders which prevented the Shield from being effective are still existing. What remains is ever-increasing military reliance of the six members on Washington and the West for which Kuwait is an advocate.

The outcome of the current session will be nothing but continued military dependence of the southern littoral states on the West, a move which by nature is a threat on the Islamic Republic, SALAM concluded.

War Reparations by Gulf States Discussed

NC2412114591 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 16 Dec 91 p 13

[Jabbari commentary: "Iraq Should Compensate Losses Inflicted on the People and Country of the Islamic Republic of Iran"]

[Excerpts] In the last days of his term of office, UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar carried out part of his unfinished mission concerning Resolution 598.

The fate of paragraph six of the resolution was finally determined after three years, and the Baghdad regime was named as the aggressor against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

While almost a week has passed since this statement was made by the UN secretary general, silence and a news blackout nevertheless reigns over the Western mass media, especially of the United States. Silence is also in the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf which were Baghdad's main mentors during the imposed Iran-Iraq war. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, a quick glance at resolution 598 shows that paragraph seven does not convey a message that the aggressor should pay war reparations. Paragraph seven of resolution 598 reads:

"The extent of damages inflicted during the conflict and the need for international assistance in reconstruction after the conflict ends should be determined, and the secretary general will be requested to send a delegation of experts to study the issue of reconstruction and to report back to the Security Council."

It was within this context that after naming Iraq as the aggressor, Perez de Cuellar stated: "The implementation of paragraph six and the identification of the fomenter of the war cannot have a specific objective!"

Meanwhile, in view of resolution 598's shortcomings, it seems that now after the aggressor has been named, Iranian diplomatic efforts on this issue should actively and extensively be coordinated in various directions to vindicate Iran's rights and to receive war reparations from Baghdad.

1. The first step may be in the form of a more active diplomatic move in the UN General Assembly to explain the dimensions of the issue from the viewpoint of the Islamic Republic of Iran so that countries can gain a better understanding of the impact of the imposed war.
2. Once Baghdad has been named as the aggressor, the second step may be based on international law in the form of taking the Iraqi Government to the international court.
3. The third step that Iran can take may be on the basis of diplomatic pressure on the regional countries that extended economic, political, and propaganda support to the Baghdad regime during the period of sacred defense.

The Arab countries of the Persian Gulf, especially Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, have confessed that they extended tens of billions of dollars in economic aid to the Baghdad dictatorship.

During Iraq's attack on Kuwait, the Kuwaiti amir promised the Iranian charge d'affaires in Saudi Arabia that to compensate for the astronomic economic aid that Kuwait had extended to Baghdad, it would help Islamic Iran in its reconstruction and would thus compensate, up to a certain extent, for the losses inflicted on Iran by Kuwait as a result of this aid. But in his meeting with our petroleum minister, the Kuwaiti amir used the pretext that Iraq had set fire to Kuwaiti oil fields, inflicting heavy damages on Kuwait, and relieved himself of this undertaking. Now with the naming of the aggressor in the imposed war and the confessions by those who backed this war, the Muslim ummah of Iran believe that part of the war reparations should be undertaken by the Persian Gulf countries and namely by Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

Clearly a political victory has been scored, thanks to the resistance of the nation. And while thanking the Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran for its diplomatic efforts and the UN secretary general for his clear position in naming the aggressor, the Muslim ummah want the Security Council and the UN General Assembly to strive for the compilation of a resolution clarifying the payment of war reparations by Iraq. It also demands that a more sympathetic and more active approach be shown on this issue by the officials in charge of the country's diplomacy and international laws.

Sudanese Response to President's Visit Praised

NC2412121991 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 16 Dec 91 pp 1,2

[Editorial: "Sudan—The Heart of the Movement of the World of Islam in the Black Continent"]

[Excerpts] The auspicious and historic welcome the Sudanese people gave to President Hojjat ol-Eslam val Moslemin Hashemi-Rafsanjani and his delegation, as well as the unforgettable presence of the Muslim people of Sudan throughout the president's stay in Sudan, are considered a new page in the history of the two countries' relations.

Sudan is considered one of the political gravity poles in Africa and is a country on which attention is focused by both its friends and foes. Its friends are interested in it because of the existence of zealous people with pure feelings and hearts filled with love for Islam. Its enemies covet it because of their interest in infiltrating these people and, through them, the African continent, especially North Africa, and to fulfill their despicable objectives by infiltrating Sudanese society.

The visit to Sudan by the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran and his delegation is considered from all aspects as a turning point in Sudan's political history. This was the first time that an official of such high standing of the Islamic Republic of Iran and his delegation visited Sudan. The Sudanese people's warm welcome to the president and the multitudinous crowds everywhere is a good manifestation of the Sudanese people's strong inclination to the revolution and to Islam. [passage omitted]

The awe-inspiring events that took place during this historic visit and the multitudinous crowds that showed up to welcome the president actually showed that these people had come to welcome the revolution and Islam. We wish that those who claimed that the revolution and Islam have been isolated after the demise of the imam and those who spoke about the isolation of the Islamic Republic of Iran were in Sudan to see the grandeur of Islam, of the revolution, and of the system of the Islamic Republic for themselves so that they would feel ashamed for all their lies.

The Muslim nations are thirsting for Islam. These nations are thirsting for Islam and for revolution. They are thirsting for the spirit of Islam and are seeking to quench this thirst by turning to the forerunners of "the world movement of Islam." They are thirsting to see the friends and associates of the late imam, and they regard the friends of dear Khomeyni as gems and are seeking to see Khomeyni in the presence of his friends.

Our revolution has been exported to the world; our revolution has its admirers; our revolution has many devoted supporters in the heart of Africa, in Asia, and throughout the world; our revolution has more followers among the history's oppressed, among those who have a grudge against arrogance, and among those whose hearts are filled with hatred for arrogance. The unforgettable and historic ceremonies in Sudan showed, as was beautifully stated by 'Umar al-Bashir, chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council for National Salvation, that: "The Sudanese people and Government welcomed those who stood up against the world, who were not

humiliated by the world's big and oppressive powers, and who are now being imitated by the Sudanese Government and nation." This is what all the true followers of Islam—and not only the Sudanese Government and people—believe.

Deputies Reportedly Kept From Meeting Montazeri

TA2312083691 (Clandestine) Iran's Flag of Freedom Radio in Persian 0330 GMT 21 Dec 91

[Text] According to reports, the regime's Ministry of Intelligence and Security has prevented another meeting of nine Majles deputies with Hoseyn 'Ali Montazeri in Qom. Some time ago a number of Majles deputies met with Mr. Montazeri, after which it was said that about 100 deputies are emulators of the former esteemed jurisconsult and Khomeyni's successor. Some deputies have claimed that this meeting is contrary to Khomeyni's decrees and was aimed at renewing Montazeri's political activity.

Pakistan

Sharif Returns From Colombo, Singapore

BK2412091191 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif returned home last night after attending the sixth SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] summit in Colombo and paying an official visit to Singapore. Talking to newsmen on board his plane back home, the prime minister said the sixth SAARC summit will go a long way in boosting cooperation among member countries. During the summit, he said, considerable progress was made toward increasing cooperation and interaction among member countries in the fields of preservation of environment, promotion of tourism and education, and elimination of terrorism.

The prime minister said he held discussions on bilateral issues with heads of state or government of several countries, including India. India and Pakistan have decided to continue the dialogue that was started in Harare. Nawaz Sharif said: If we succeed in resolving our bilateral disputes, it will be a great achievement for us.

Zaki: Ties With Russia To Be Strengthened

BK2412093491 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 24 Dec 91

[Text] Akram Zaki, the secretary general of foreign affairs, has said that Pakistan had decided to promote cooperation with Russia even before the formal collapse of the Soviet Union. Talking to newsmen in Islamabad yesterday evening, he said Pakistan will strengthen its ties with Russia in various fields, including science, culture, and trade.

Answering a question about the Afghanistan problem, the secretary general said Pakistan and Russia share identical views on this issue and they will play their respective roles in the resolution of this problem.